

ALL KINDS OF INTERESTING THINGS

PERTAINING TO THE
DAVIS
HINCKLEY
GROSS
LOMBARD/PETERSON
FAMILIES

OF TRURO
CAPE COD
MASSACHUSETTS

NEW INFORMATION, UPDATES,
REVISIONS, CORRECTIONS, &
SPECULATIONS



POSD VILLAGE, TIBURO, HALL.

October, 1999

Dear Extended Family,

Producing one of these family histories is a lot like giving birth. The gestation is at least as long, and as the embryo grows so does my excitement. I'm euphoric when at last it's here, and I can see it – defects and all.

Past productions suffered with errors and omissions when I got excited and finished in a rush. I've learned to be more patient, difficult as it is, and let nature takes its course rather than inducing delivery.

This book does not analyze any particular line of the family, but I did make brief connections. The contents are particularly choice pieces of family history too good not to share. Individually, they are phenomenal, and in the big picture they all relate to one another.

My biggest problem is to keep things in the past tense. I go back in years and spend time with these people to see what made them tick. It seems real to me, and I report things as if they were contemporary events. I'm not sure I caught all the "is's" that should have been "was's." It's also hard to determine whether minutiae are relevant or not.

Nature abhors a vacuum, and I abhor blank spaces when a piece of writing lops over onto a new page for a few lines. Thanks to eBay from whence cometh my old Cape Cod postcards, to my fellow genealogists who never stint on sharing photographs, and to all kinds of new resources I was able to augment each piece of writing with an appropriate or interesting picture.

"HANS" is the *nom de plume* of my husband Lowell. Several years ago before finding an actual photo of a Civil War pontoon boat, he drew these pictures from Thomas Paine, Jr.'s descriptions.

Spelling, grammar and punctuation are as they were originally written. I must say I was aghast that Joshua H. Davis, Sr., prior to his 1838 school term, actually said "you was" twice in his letter to Anna.

This book would not have been possible without the following people:

Richard "Bulldog" Ebens of Hudson, MA who pursues all new clues and ancestry tidbits, figures everything out, and shares with everyone.

Sandra Gilley of South Portland, ME who sent me dozens of old family and Truro photographs. Several of them are included in this book.

Nancy Libby of Kennebunk, ME who has the Davis family photo album. Via digital camera, diskettes, and computers these photos enhance the written word.

Dale Potter Clark of Vassalboro, ME who opened the door to Readfield, ME and the Benjamin Davis line – her ancestors. Dale furnished the information about the Ben Davis apple.

Margaret Dyar Ashworth of Bremerton, WA who sent me wonderful things about her grandmother Mary Davis Dyar and her father Ralph Dyar. Kudos to anyone who can make the Chinese junk and the Nantucket sink.

Vivian Mendenhall of Anchorage, AK who e-mailed me in early October, 1999. Vivian is the daughter of Ruth Dyar Mendenhall, Margaret Dyar Ashworth's older sister, and she is anxious to jump onto our genealogy bandwagon.

We are spread apart as far as possible – Maine to Alaska – across the northern part of our country. At times I feel like a yenta matching distant relatives with other distant relatives, but I can't think of anything that gives me greater pleasure. Ten years ago none of us knew each other. Like Abou ben Adem's, may our tribe increase.

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Odds & Ends

"Events often possess an interest proportioned to their remoteness in point of time; and though but little regarded at the time of their occurrence, they may be reviewed at remote periods with thrilling interest."

"Distance lends enchantment to the view,
And robes the mountain in its azure hue."

"I propose to trace... on these pages some events of... interest, which may serve to revive pleasant years; and when my pilgrimage is past, they may interest those by whom I hope to be held in affectionate remembrance."

Joshua Hinckley Davis, Sr.
The Book of Family History

Benjamin Davis m. 1767 *Betsey Rowe Davis*

1-----2-----3-----4-----	
<i>Benjamin Davis</i>	<i>James Davis</i>
dau. <i>Betsey Davis</i>	son <i>Benjamin Davis</i>
son <i>Benjamin Davis</i>	son <i>Ebenezer Davis</i>
son <i>Ebenezer Davis</i>	dau <i>Sarah Elizabeth</i>
	m.
	<i>Dr. Nathaniel Jordan Knight</i>
	<i>Ebenezer Davis</i>
	m. 1796
	<i>Azubah Hinckley</i>
	dau. of <i>Benjamin Hinckley</i>
	sister to <i>Benjamin Hinckley, 2d</i>
	aunt of <i>Benjamin Hinckley, 3rd</i>
	<i>Betsey Davis</i>
	m. 1803
	<i>SOLOMON Myrick</i>
	dau. <i>Azubah Myrick</i>

1-----2-----3-----4-----5-----6-----7-----	
<i>Dinah Davis</i>	<i>SOLOMON DAVIS</i>
m. 1816	m. 1821
<i>Benjamin Dyer</i>	<i>Betsey Snow</i>
dau. <i>Elizabeth</i>	
son <i>Benjamin Dyer, Jr.</i>	
son <i>Ebenezer Davis (E.D.) Dyer</i>	
dau. <i>Azubah Dyer</i>	
	<i>Betsey Davis</i>
	son <i>Nathaniel Jordan</i>
	<i>Knight Davis, 1st</i>
	(born ca. 1845) &
	<i>Nathaniel Jordan</i>
	<i>Knight Davis, 2nd</i>
	dau. <i>Bessie Davis</i>
	son <i>Benjamin Davis</i>
	<i>Benjamin Davis</i>
	m. ca. 1835
	<i>Betsey Stevens</i>
	sons <i>Nathaniel Jordan</i>
	<i>Knight Davis, 1st</i>
	(born ca. 1845) &
	<i>Nathaniel Jordan</i>
	<i>Knight Davis, 2nd</i>
	dau. <i>Bessie Davis</i>
	son <i>Benjamin Davis</i>
	<i>Azubah Davis Paine</i>
	dau. <i>Elizabeth</i>
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	<i>GROSS Paine</i>

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13 - <i>Benjamin</i>	sister of <i>Betsey Lombard Cook</i>
6 - <i>Ebenezer</i>	aunt to <i>Elizabeth (Libby) Kenney Newcomb</i>
5 - <i>Jaazaniah</i>	cousin of <i>Benjamin Lombard</i>
4 - <i>Azubah</i>	2nd cousin of <i>Benjamin Lombard, Jr.</i>
3 - <i>Solomon</i>	great-granddaughter of <i>JAAZANIAH GROSS, 1st</i>
3 - <i>Nathaniel Jordan Knight</i>	granddaughter of <i>JAAZANIAH GROSS, 2nd</i>
	niece of <i>JAAZANIAH GROSS, 3rd</i>
	<i>Joshua H. Davis</i>
	m. 1839
	<i>Anna Gross Lombard</i>
	son <i>SOLOMON</i>
	dau. <i>Sarah Elizabeth</i>

HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO GO CRAZY EXPLORING ONE'S GENEALOGY

I have distilled a big chunk of our family tree to have a little fun with it. Our ancestors' predilection for naming children after other family members was honorable and actually helpful in nailing down some connections, but it also caused confusion to those of us down the line.

The chief "culprits" are: *Benjamin*, *Betsey* (and its variations), *JAAZANIAH*, *Ebenezer*, *Azubah*, *SOLOMON*, and *Nathaniel Jordan Knight*. The majority of these names are found in two generations with a some overlap into the preceding and succeeding ones. Spouses have have not been identified unless their names "qualify."

Please use **Joshua Hinckley Davis, Sr.** as your hub. I have shown his relationship to the people with these seven first names. (**JHD. Sr.**, is the father of Joshua Davis, Jr., grandfather of Kenneth Davis, great-grandfather to Kenneth's daughters, and great-great-grandfather to Kenneth's grandchildren.)

JHD, Sr.'s children have:

4 Aunt Betseys (same generation)

4 First cousins named Elizabeth

Except for JHD's brothers Solomon and Benjamin, all the brothers and sisters in this generation had a daughter named Elizabeth. Mercifully, Solomon was childless, and Benjamin only had sons, or we would probably be in worse shape!

2 First cousins & 1 first cousin-once removed (by marriage)
named Nathaniel Jordan Knight

Dr. Nathaniel Jordan Knight married Sarah Elizabeth, daughter of JHD's uncle James Webb Davis.

JHD's brother Benjamin and his wife Betsey were married 10 years before their first son Nathaniel Jordan Knight Davis was born. 20th Century conjecture is that Dr. Knight was instrumental in securing the first live birth for this family which may have followed years of miscarriages/stillbirths. This poor child died months after suffering burns from a lamp igniting his nightshirt. He had a brother named Levi Franklin Stevens Davis several years his junior. Later, another son was born and named Nathaniel Jordan Knight Davis, this time more likely in honor of his dead brother than the doctor.

2 first cousins named Ebenezer

2 first cousins named Jaazaniah

Dyer with an E is not the same as Dyar with an A. E. D. Dyer (Ebenezer Davis Dyer) is not the same person as E. D. Dyar (Emerson Dudley Dyar). Mary Davis (JHD's daughter) will eventually marry her second cousin E. D. Dyar (of Maine), not her first cousin E.D. Dyer (of Massachusetts). As far as can be determined, there is no connection between the Dyers and the Dyars.

Anna Gross Lombard (who married JHD, Sr.) should not be confused with her grandmother **Anna Lombard Gross**.

Betsey Davis (sister of JHD, Sr.) married Isaac Snow Gross and became JHD's brother-in-law. Isaac Snow Gross is also his wife Anna's uncle (brother of her mother Elizabeth Gross Lombard Peterson).

Benjamin and Betsey Rowe Davis were grandparents to 19 grandchildren. Among them were 3 named Benjamin Davis, 3 named Ebenezer Davis, 2 named Betsey Davis, 1 named Sarah Elizabeth and 2 named Azubah. Listed below are the seven common names of our ancestors and how they relate to Joshua Hinckley Davis, Sr.

Benjamin

1. **Benjamin Davis** - grandfather
2. **Benjamin Davis** - uncle (lived in Maine)
3. **Benjamin Davis** - cousin (lived in Maine - son of his Uncle Benjamin)
4. **Benjamin Davis** - cousin (son of his Uncle James Webb Davis)
5. **Benjamin Davis** - brother
6. **Benjamin Davis** - *great-nephew* (grandson of his brother Benjamin)
7. **Benjamin** Hinckley, 1st - maternal grandfather
8. **Benjamin** Hinckley, 2d - uncle
9. **Benjamin** Hinckley, 3d - cousin
10. **Benjamin** Dyer - brother-in-law
11. **Benjamin** Dyer, Jr. - nephew
12. **Benjamin** Lombard, 1st - cousin of wife Anna Lombard Davis
13. **Benjamin** Lombard, 2d - cousin " " " "

Betsey/Elizabeth/Libby/Bessie

1. Betsey Davis - grandmother
2. Betsey Davis Myrick - aunt (wife of his Uncle Solomon)
3. Betsey Davis Gordon - cousin (lived in Maine - daughter of his Uncle Benjamin)
4. Betsey Snow Davis - sister-in-law, wife of brother Solomon
5. Betsey Davis Gross - sister
6. Betsey Stevens Davis - sister-in-law, wife of brother Benjamin
7. Betsey Lombard Cook - sister-in-law (wife Anna's sister)
8. Sarah Elizabeth Davis Knight - cousin (daughter of Uncle James Webb Davis)
9. Elizabeth Dyer Noble - niece (daughter of his sister Dinah Davis Dyer)
10. Sarah Elizabeth Gross - niece (daughter of his sister Betsey)
11. Elizabeth Paine - niece (daughter of his sister Azubah Davis Paine)
12. Sarah Elizabeth Gross Davis - daughter
13. Elizabeth (Libby) Kenney Newcomb - niece (wife Anna's sister's daughter)
14. Elizabeth Gross Lombard Peterson - mother-in-law
15. Bessie Davis - *great-niece* (granddaughter of his brother Benjamin)

EBENEZER

1. Ebenezer Lombard Davis - father
2. Ebenezer Davis - cousin (lived in Maine - son of his Uncle Benjamin)
3. Ebenezer Davis - cousin (son of his Uncle James Webb Davis)
4. Ebenezer Davis Dyer - nephew (son of his sister Dinah)
5. Ebenezer Davis - brother
6. Ebenezer Lester Davis - nephew (son of his brother Ebenezer)

JAAZANIAH GROSS

1. JAAZANIAH GROSS - great-grandfather of JHD's wife, Anna
2. JAAZANIAH GROSS - grandfather of " " "
3. JAAZANIAH GROSS - uncle of " " "
4. JAAZANIAH GROSS - nephew (son of Isaac & Betsey Davis Gross, JHD's sister)
5. JAAZANIAH GROSS Paine - nephew (son of Thomas & Azubah Davis Paine,
JHD's sister)

Azubah

1. Azubah Hinckley Davis - mother
2. Azubah Myrick - cousin (daughter of his Aunt Betsey Davis Myrick)
3. Azubah Davis Paine - sister
4. Azubah Dyer - niece (daughter of his sister Dinah Davis Dyer)

SOLOMON

1. SOLOMON DAVIS - brother
2. SOLOMON Myrick - uncle (married to Aunt Betsey Davis Myrick)
3. SOLOMON DAVIS - son

Nathaniel Jordan Knight

1. Dr. Nathaniel Jordan Knight - married to cousin Sarah Elizabeth Davis
Knight (daughter of his Uncle James Webb
Davis)
2. Nathaniel Jordan Knight Davis, 1st - nephew (son of his brother Benjamin)
3. Nathaniel Jordan Knight Davis, 2nd - nephew (son of his brother Benjamin)

THE
BENJAMIN DAVIS
FAMILIES
OF
READFIELD, MAINE



A LONG SHOT PAYS OFF

Mary Davis Dyar's accounts of her visits to Readfield, ME from 1865 and 1870 opened new vistas in our ancestry.

Mary stayed with her father's first cousin Benjamin Davis and his wife Caroline Hunt Davis. In 1865 their unmarried son John was about 20, Mary's age, and their married son Joshua, 22, lived with his wife Susanna in their own home on the Davis farmstead. These young men and Mary were second cousins.

Benjamin Davis, 2nd, quit the sea and took up farming in Maine about 1812 when he was 45 years old. His wife Sarah Long Davis of Harwich, MA died about this time, and Benjamin was remarried to widow Eunice Lambert of Readfield.

Benjamin and Sarah Davis had two sons **Benjamin** and Ebenezer (what else?!) and several daughters. One of these daughters, **Mary Davis**, married Azor Dyar of West Freeman, ME and became the mother-in-law of Mary Davis Dyar of Somerville, MA. This is another example of identical names in our ancestry.

Benjamin, 2nd's oldest daughter, **Sally**, married Samuel Smith of Readfield. Their son Salmon married Julia. The Smith and Davis farms were near one another.

Salmon and Julia Smith had one son and four daughters. John F. (Fred), the oldest, was the boy captivated by

Mary's microscope. Three of the little girls were the cloying nuisances Mary couldn't shake when she visited the Smiths. Another daughter was born later.

Salmon (Mary's second cousin) was the man with unkempt hair who ate dinner with his shirt unbuttoned and chest exposed. Julia was the hostess who baked a fly into Mary's biscuit.

The Smith household was described as being very untidy. The grinning little girls had dirty faces and dirty calico dresses. Julia, likewise, wore a dirty, faded calico dress. Conversation at this house was difficult, and after a long day (and another meal) Mary was glad it was time to go back to Benjamin's.

John F. (Fred) died while in his teens. Julia and Myrtle, the youngest girl, ended up on Pearl St. in Somerville, MA in the early part of this century. They rented living quarters, took in boarders, and Myrtle worked as a *stenographer*.

Benjamin, 3rd, husband of Caroline and father to Joshua and Josh, is the focus of this segment, and we'll see why shortly.

With the number of Davis offspring who lived in Readfield, ME, Richard Ebens and I both felt there had to be distant cousins from that line of the family.

A niece of Rich's recently moved to Winthrop, ME, a town near Readfield. He asked her if she'd check cemeteries in Readfield for Davises.

Rich's niece not only found Davises, she found fresh flowers on their graves, and a flag on Benjamin, 2nd's, honoring him as a veteran of the War of 1812.

Next, Rich took the bull by the horns and called city hall in Readfield. He cut to the chase and told the woman who answered the phone that he was looking for any descendants of Benjamin Davis of Readfield.

The woman replied, "You're speaking with one of them." This woman is named Evelyn Potter and is active in the Readfield Historical Society. Her daughter, Dale Potter Clark, maintains an impressive website about Readfield and is a genealogist and a participant in living history performances. Evelyn and Dale descend from John Davis.

I sent Dale a copy of Mary's journal. She was able to identify the old routes Mary took on her excursions around Readfield's countryside. She identified the homes where Benjamin & Caroline and Joshua & Susanna lived 150 years ago.

The home where Joshua and Susanna lived is probably the original. Benjamin and Caroline's house was destroyed by fire many years ago, but another was built on its site. Mary made reference to the "Davis mansion", and the contemporary photo shows a huge house. Perhaps the original was replicated.

The following lines gleaned from Mary's journal are easy to brush off or

ignore, but they have great significance as we will see.

1865

"...on the other side [of the road] is a stone wall which encloses one of Benjamin's orchards..."

"...we went into the apple orchard below the house..."

"...we found John pruning young trees in the nursery..."

"...after dinner we went down to the orchard..."

1867

"...we went down to the orchard and sitting on the stone wall under the apple trees..."

"...we went down to the orchard, and sitting first on the wall and then in an apple tree we [watched the men work]..."

A tornado was the dramatic ending to Mary's 1867 visit.

"Several apple trees were blown down and apples covered the ground under the trees."

"...watched the boys picking up the apples..."

In late May of 1870, Mary made a long-anticipated spring visit to Readfield. Nature was in her early glory and she made these observations:

“O the apple blossoms. Was ever anything so perfect as an apple blossom; with its pink painted bud, and its pink opening cup? With its faint suggestion of fragrance borne out on the ready air, and its perfectly intoxicating odor when you are in the middle of the orchard; and unscrupulous of robbery, and forgetful of apples, you draw down a scrawny branch and the beauty and fragrance are yours. There never was such a year for apple blossoms they told me, and such pink ones.”

“What essence did this Spring have to give such a gift of color to its favorite blossom? Gnarled and knotted old trees, homely ungraceful old apple trees; so your loving lovely nature comes out over your spreading branches making you sweetest and fairest of all the trees of the orchard. So shall sometimes bloom out earth’s homely natures, men and women with scrawny, low-boughed branches; and their fresh fragrance like that of apple blossoms is the loveliest gift that human nature knows.”

Apples, obviously will be our next focus. Even with several dozen readings of Mary’s journal, I assumed Benjamin, 3rd’s farm was the diversified, old-fashioned kind - cash crops, cows, pigs, sheep, chickens, and a small orchard. The orchard(s) now take center stage. Benjamin Davis, 3rd developed the Ben Davis apple. Dale Clark kindly furnished me with the following information, and Nancy Libby of Kennebunk, ME actually had a Ben Davis apple tree at her former home in Kennebunk.

Rich Ebens went to Readfield in August for “Readfield Days.” He photographed the home sites of Benjamin and Joshua Davis and met Dale Clark and her mother Evelyn Potter.

Rich also met Relje & Savage, Dale Clark’s alter ego, who can’t read, can’t vote, but can say just about anything she wants to because “she’s over 200 years old.”

Rich did the work on the Maine Davises which follows the information about the Ben Davis apple.





"Relief Savage" and Richard Ebens
Readfield Days in Readfield, ME
August, 1999



**Site of old
Davis homestead
Readfield, Maine**



**View from old
Davis homestead**



**Old barn on
Davis property
Readfield, Maine**

**Joshua Davis home
Readfield, Maine**



**View from
Joshua Davis home**



**John L. Davis
Aug. 30, 1844
Oct. 30, 1914
His Wife
Grace U. Crosby
Sept. 30, 1847
Feb. 2, 1929**



Notes for Benjamin Davis:

Ben Davis, who lived on the Sturtevant Road in Readfield, had an orchard near his home. A blight in the 1940's destroyed the orchard. He developed an apple that was named the "Ben Davis." The apple, which is one of the heirloom varieties, almost became extinct, but in speaking to a local historian / farmer I learned that the tree is still available from places that deal in old plant and tree varieties.

The following information taken from sources on the internet:

From Cummins Nursery catalogue:

BEN DAVIS Another old processor -- there were a million Ben Davis trees in Dad's area back in the hills of Southern Illinois 60 years ago!! Very dry, hard -- makes a brilliant yellow sauce.

From Neva's Apple Variety description page:

Ben Davis apple ripens in August. Old Maine apple. Introduced in 1849.

From Jim Schupp, University of Maine

Many of us can agree that there is such a thing as an obsolete apple. Ben Davis was an important variety in the east at the turn of the century. It had utility to the consumer because of its extraordinary handling characteristics and long storage life. Here was an apple that you could dump into a barrel, screw the lid down tight, roll onto a cart and transport by horse-drawn wagon over primitive roads to the nearest port or rail siding. Ben Davis could survive the trip in an unrefrigerated boxcar or ship's hold to a distant market and it provided a fresh apple that otherwise would have been unavailable to the consumer. When practical refrigeration and better transportation became available, Ben Davis became obsolete, because consumers could then be offered much better tasting fruit. The speed of its demise was accelerated by dishonest packing practices and by the failure of the eastern apple industry to adopt a shipping container that was more practical than the barrel. In this story are the seeds that sowed the Western apple industry and a lesson about the need to consider the consumer.

From 5 Star Nursery Brooklin, Maine:

Large, conical, white-fleshed, red and dark carmine striped fruit is borne heavily and annually. The tree is a very good pollinator and is one of the parents of Cortland. Bruise resistant, exceptional keeper. Very good in a warm location in regard to ripening quality.

Stories from Cummins Nursery catalogue:

BEN DAVIS

Only the peddlers from Mississippi would take our Ben Davis, only the trucker-peddlers from the Deep South would still buy our Ben Davis apples. Cotton with red skin wrapped around it, that's what folks at Dix called the Ben Davis apple. Cotton with red skin around it. You could grind up Ben Davis apples, put the pummy in the cider press, and folks would claim the Ben Davis would soak up cider from the press!!

But Ben Davis apples would haul a long ways on these bumpy roads of Depression times, they'd haul a long ways with never a

bruise, and way down South they still looked good after two or three days hauling. Even so, the black peddlers from Mississippi would pay only twenty cents for a bushel of Ben Davis, a poured up bushel, maybe two hundred bushels poured up in the rack of an ancient truck. Just twenty cents a bushel. But in these last days before the War, it cost a nickel to have a bushel picked; five dollars a top picker could make for a hundred bushel day. Picking a hundred bushels meant twelve hours of racing up and down a 25-foot ladder, a hundred and forty long trips up and down the ladder, a 30-pound picking bag of Ben Davis sagging heavy on the shoulder straps. But five dollars for a day's picking, five dollars for one day's work when ten dollars was normal wages for a whole week. Five dollars was good picking money.

"Mortgage-lifter", the Ben Davis had once been called, "Mortgage-lifter", because so many farms had been bought and paid for with Ben Davis money. Back before I was born, they say, here in my home county in Southern Illinois there had been a million Ben Davis apple trees. Back in those good old days, apples had been packed in wooden barrels, three bushels or thereabouts in every barrel. The lid of the barrel would be screwed down hard, the apples inside crushed together, but then held in place. Barrels of apples were rolled up planks into wagons, onto rail cars, onto steamers, down cobbled city streets -- barrels and barrels of Ben Davis apples. Nine barrels to a two-horse wagon; at harvest time these two-horse wagons laden with barrels of Ben Davis apples ranged wheel to wheel on the railroad sidings at Dix and Divide and Texico, at Kell and Walnut Hill and Boyd, at Centralia and Salem and Kinmundy. Over in Calhoun County my daddy had worked as a checker, loading barrelled Ben Davis onto steamers on the Illinois River, loading Ben Davis for Memphis and Natchez and N'Orleans.

"Apple dry houses" stood at every crossroads here in Jefferson County. An apple dry house was a structure where great racks of peeled and sliced Ben Davis apples were sulfured and dried, dried and then packed in burlap sacks, carted off to the railroad cars, and sent off to the piebakers of Philadelphia and Winnipeg and Souix City. In the fall and early winter, all the womenfolk roundabout would be peeling apples for the dry houses, sometimes at home, sometimes en masse at church or grange.

The apple barrel is gone now, of course, barrel is gone forever and apples are shipped in bushel baskets. The cooper plies his craft no more in apple towns, no more the barrel press, no more the line of two-horse wagons waiting at the railroad siding. New apples now, more gently handled than before -- new names to us like Jonathan and Grimes Golden, like Starks Delicious and the Roman Beauty.

So now our Ben Davis orchard has to go. It's 1938, and the day of Ben Davis apples is past, so the Ben Davis trees that Grandfather

had put in the ground 40 years ago would have to go. The apple barrel, the cooper, the Ben Davis apple tree, they all are passed away.

THIRSTY APPLES

Lots of folks complain about those big red Delicious from Washington state being all dry and mealy once you got your teeth through the tough skin. But I tell you, you don't know "dry and mealy" till you've chewed a Ben Davis apple.

Eating a Ben Davis apple was an experience you remember. Ol' Ben was a pretty enough apple, and the inside was a pure white. But in your mouth, that pure white apple turned into pure white cotton; only difference was that the Ben Davis didn't lodge fibers in your teeth.

Back 25 years ago, when son Jamie was a student at Cornell, he was experimenting with cider blends. He'd put together all sorts of mixes -- basically Macs and Delicious and Goldens and such-like, but with different special varieties added in -- usually English cider apples or their cousins from Normandy, sometimes Chestnut Crab, or Dolgo, or Transcendant. He always built up his rack of pulp with the special variety he was testing on the bottom "cheese", and then the regular Delicious and Macs and Goldens racked on top.

One Saturday afternoon I brought Jamie a bushel of Ben Davis to try; told him that would give a special dry character to his cider. Somewhat doubtfully, Jamie ground up the Ben Davis, racked the pulp, racked the regular basic varieties on top, and began to screw down his press.

Now you could see juice begin to flow from the top four racks, the Delicious and Goldens and Macs, but none from the rack of Ben Davis pulp. Jamie kept putting on the pressure, but still no Ben Davis juice came into the catch-vat at all -- the Ben Davis pulp was soaking up every drop. Jamie kept pressing away, and pretty soon we heard a great "burp" from the cider press, and an empty gurgle from the half-filled cider barrel.

That bushel of Ben Davis had soaked up all the Delicious and Mac and Golden Delicious juice from the racks above and then had emptied that half-filled barrel of cider for dessert!!

by

Dr. James N. Cummins

Emeritus Professor of Pomology

Cornell University

From Epicurious Virtual Reality Core Curriculum:

Variety: Cortland

Basics: Introduced in New York State around the turn of the century, the Cortland is a cross between the McIntosh and a Ben Davis apple. It does not discolor when cut.

Great Lakes Fruit Inc.

After the many attributes of McIntosh were discovered, plant breeders began crossing it with other varieties to enhance its traits. One of the earliest was Cortland, combined with the Ben Davis variety and released early this century. Its flavor is sweet compared to McIntosh, and it has a flush of crimson against a pale yellow background sprinkled with short, dark red stripes and gray-green dots. Cortland has very white flesh and is an excellent dessert apple.

Homepage of Lakeside Orchard Manchester, Maine

CORTLAND A favorite cooking apple which is also excellent for fresh eating. A red apple, it has very white flesh that is slow to brown and so is a good choice for salads. Available in gift packs starting the last week in September, and until we run out in midwinter. The Cortland is a Ben Davis x McIntosh cross which was named in 1915 by the New York State Ag. Experiment Station in Geneva, New York.



The D.D. Merriman mercantile was located at Readfield Corner in what is now often referred to as the Brisbon Block. According to H.E. Mitchell's 1903 Readfield directory, Merriman dealt in dry & fancy goods, underwear and general merchandise.

This section of the Corner survived the great fire of 1921.



pictured circa 1892 (dmc photo)

F.I. Brown store & home on present Old Kents Hill Road.

F.I. began his mercantile business in 1879, and by 1890 he needed larger capacity so the store pictured above was built. He also had a wagon on the road five days a week selling his wares. The house still stands, but the store is now gone.

16 Sep 1999

Family Group Sheet

Husband: **Benjamin Davis** #315 died at age: 71

Born: 28-Nov-1768

in: Truro, MA

Died: 14-Oct-1840

in: Readfield, ME

Buried:

in: Reidfield Corner Cemetery

Ref: D315

Occupation: sailor

Father: Benjamin Davis #313

Mother: Betsy Rowe (Roe) #314

From Joshua Davis' records. "Benjamin was married in Chatham, MA and resided there until before the War of 1812. He moved to Readfield, ME. In the early part of his life he followed the sea, and later became a farmer. He married Sarah Long of Chatham, MA; following Sarah's death he married Eunice Lambert, a widow, of Readfield."

From Readfield Town Records. "Veteran of War of 1812. Owner of pew #21 in Freevill Baptist Meeting House. Sold for \$6.44 to the Town of Readfield."

Benjamin must have been about nine years old when his father disappeared. The existence of the family would have been precarious; they owned no property and the main breadwinner was gone. It was not unusual for boys at this time to go to sea at a very early age, which must have been the case with Benjamin. What he earned was essential to the existence of the family.

With this early start it would not be unusual for young men of ability to be Masters of their own ships in their early twenties. From what we can gather Benjamin attained the rank of captain, and that he served in some capacity in the War of 1812. The vital statistics on Benjamin's family while on the Cape are lacking; there is only his marriage to Sarah Long and the birth of his daughter Ruth. His family is listed in the 1800 census, but there is no mention in the 1810 census.

A piece of information in the Vienna, ME vital records provides material for speculation. It records the birth of Ruth (Davis) Dudley as Jan 1800 in Norway. Could it be that Benjamin's wife joined him on his travels, and that a number of his children were born in foreign ports or at sea? It is possible that Benjamin, having been denied the presence of a father because of his life at sea and his disappearance at sea, determined that this would not happen to his family. It would then follow that Benjamin would abandon the life of the sea and take up farming, which is in total contrast with the life of the sailor. While the sea captain is separated from his family for months and years at a time, the farmer's family is intimately knit together in a cooperative effort.

In his will Benjamin left 1/3 of his estate to his wife Eunice. He left two dollars to his oldest son Benjamin. The remainder of his estate was divided between the remaining children: Jane Atkinson wife of David Atkinson, Sally Smith wife of Samuel Smith, Ruth Dudley wife of Joseph Dudley, Betsey Gordon wife of James Gordon, Mary Dyar wife of Azor Dyar, Sabrina Davis, Ebenezer Davis.

In all probability Benjamin transferred his farm before his death to his son Benjamin.

In the 1800 census Benjamin was living in Chatham, MA and had 3 daughters.

16 Sep 1999

Family of Benjamin Davis #315 - continued

Wife: **Sarah Long #5717**

Married: 17 Feb 1792 in: Truro, MA (Intentions) his age: 23

Born: in:

Died: in:

Father:

Mother:

She was from Harwich, MA

F Child 1 **Jane Davis #5775**

Born: ca 1792 ¹ in:

Died: in:

Spouse: David Atkinson #5862

Married: 7 Jun 1815 in: Readfield, ME

Other: 19 May 1815 in: Readfield, ME (Intentions)

F Child 2 **Sally Davis #5774**

Born: ca 1796 ¹ in:

Died: in:

Spouse: Samuel Smith #5840 b. 1790

Married: 11 Nov 1815 in: Readfield, ME

Other: 9 Sep 1815 in: Readfield, ME (Intentions)

F Child 3 **Ruth Davis #5776**

Born: 30 Jan 1799 in: Chatham, MA

Died: in:

Spouse: Joseph Dudley #5852 b. 22 Dec 1794

Married: 23 Jun 1822 in: Readfield, ME

F Child 4 **Betsey Davis #5777**

Born: ca 1805 ¹ in:

Died: 10 May 1883 in:

Spouse: James Gordon #5789 b. ca 1800

Married: 26 Oct 1826 in: Readfield, ME

Other: 1 Oct 1826 in: Readfield, ME (Intentions)

M Child 5 **Benjamin Davis #5780**

Born: ca 1810 in:

Died: 6 May 1887 in: Readfield, ME

Ref: Occupation: Farmer

Spouse: Caroline Head #5786 b. ca 1808 d. 27 Mar 1877

Married: 1836 in:

F Child 6 **Mary Davis #5778**

Born: ca 1811 ¹ in:

Died: in:

Spouse: Azor Dyar #5782

Married: 27 Dec 1836 in: Readfield, ME

F Child 7 **Sabrina Davis #5779**

Born: in:

Died: in:

According to J. H. Davis' records she married a Mr Olmstead and had a daughter Ann who died in Boston.

16 Sep 1999

Family of Benjamin Davis #315 - continued

M Child 8 **Ebenezer Davis** #5781

Born: ca 1814 ¹ in: ME

Died: in:

Spouse: Emily unknown #6120

Married: in:

Wife: **Eunice Lumbert** #5785

Married: 16 Apr 1815 in: Readfield, ME his age: 46

Other: 1 Apr 1815 in: Readfield, ME (Intentions)

Born: in:

Died: 8 Nov 1847 in: Readfield, ME

Buried: in: Readfield, ME

Father:

Mother:

She was the widow of Joseph Lambert

¹ US Census 1850



This Packard house is still standing and occupied in 1999. This photo was taken before 1909.
The house is located on route Route 17, just west of Palmetter Ridge Road intersection, in Kents Hill, Maine.
It is referred to as Dick Wilson's house in the text below.

16 Sep 1999

Family Group Sheet

Husband: **Salmon Smith** #5843 died at age: 78

Born: 14 Feb 1821 in: Readfield, ME

Died: 22 May 1899 in:

Father: Samuel Smith #5840

Mother: Sally Davis #5774

In the 1860 census he is listed as a farmer. He had a real estate value of \$1500 and a personal estate of \$327.

From the Readfield town records;1841 Customer at James Tillebrown's store,1843 Member of Christian Society,1856 Member of Universalist Society 1854Taxpayer in Readfield,1853 Road Surveyor, 1855 Receipt for furnishing wood for Dist 9,1866, 1875, 1884 Agent for School District 9, 1843, 1863 Readfield voter list,1863 liable for enrollment in civil war

Wife: **Julia F. Jackson** #5846

Married: 2 Dec 1854 in: Readfield, ME his age: 33

Born: in:

Died: 16 Feb 1906 ¹ in: Somerville, MA

Father:

Mother:

She was from Winthrop, ME. According to Readfield, ME town records she was buried in Somerville, MA. In the 1900 census she was living on Pearl St. (which is near where the rest of the Davis family settled in Somerville) along with her youngest daughter Myrtle. They rented their facilities and had a boarder, Blanche Naylor, living with them.

M Child 1 **John F. Smith** #5847 died at age: 18

Born: 11 Oct 1856 in: Readfield, ME

Died: 4 Aug 1875 in: Readfield, ME

F Child 2 **Luella J Smith** #5848

Born: 1 Nov 1858 in: Readfield, ME

Died: in:

F Child 3 **Addie E. Smith** #5849

Born: 3 Sep 1860 in: Readfield, ME

Died: in:

F Child 4 **Lottie F. Smith** #5850

Born: 21 Sep 1863 in: Readfield, ME

Died: in:

According to Readfield, ME records a L. F. Smith married J. F. Chipman of New Portland, ME on 12 Sep 1887

F Child 5 **Myrtle L. Smith** #5851

Born: 15 Jun 1874 in: Readfield, ME

Died: in:

In the 1900 census in Somerville, MA her occupation was listed as a stenographer.

¹ Readfield, ME town records

Salmon Smith - 1860 Agricultural Census

40 acres improved land
25 acres unimproved lands
value of real estate \$1500

Value of farm equipment \$50

1 horse
2 milch cows
2 oxen
2 other cattle
1 swine
value of animals \$210

20 bushels of indian corn
69 bushels of oats
5 bushels of peas and beans
75 bushels of irish potatos
25 bushels of barley
value of crops \$10

200 lbs of butter
50 lbs of cheese
15 tons of hay

value of animals slaughtered \$35

Benjamin Davis - 1860 Agricultural Census

150 acres improved land
50 acres unimproved land
value of land \$4000

value of farm implements \$50

2 horses
2 milch cows
4 oxen
14 cattle
40 sheep
value of livestock \$665

76 bushels of wheat
100 bushels of indian corn
136 bushels of oats
120 lbs of wool
8 bushels of peas and beans
200 bushels of irish potatos
20 bushels of barley
value of crops \$600

200 lbs of butter
225 lbs of cheese
40 tons of hay

value of slaughtered animals \$96

Zion's Herald

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1918

THE TEN GROSS SISTERS OF WELLFLEET

Lurania Higgins

Abigail Barge

Sally Chipman

Bethiah Dyer

Rebecca Barnicoat

Mary Otheman

Cynthia Atwood

Thankful Willard

Deborah Paine

Maria Atkins

by Harriet Storer Fisk

These famous sisters, who lived during the early part of the nineteenth century, were all members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, two of them being the wives of Methodist preachers. They were all singers of ability. The accompanying print is from a daguerreotype, taken on the occasion of the sisters being together for the first time in their lives, although their ages then ranged from eighty-three to fifty-six. Their descendants are now to be found from one end of the country to the other, and even across the sea.



THE TEN GROSS SISTERS OF WELLFLEET, WHO ALL SANG LIKE ANGELS
 Doctor Cynthia is standing at the extreme left

Photograph taken in 1850

Front:	Sarah (Sally) - 83 1773 - 1867	Abigail - 81 1769 - 1854	Lurania - 83 1767 - 1856
Middle:	Cynthia - 64 1786 - 1865	Polly (Mary) - 65 1785 - 1876	Rebecca - 67 1783 - 1862
			Bethiah - 75 1775 - 1868
Back:	Maria (Miriam) - 56 1794 - 1877	Deborah - 61 1789 - 1882	Thankful - 62 1788- 1872

One of the most interesting genealogical records in Methodism, and one in which a very large number of living Methodists may find themselves included, has to do with the famous "Ten Gross Sisters," who lived during the first part of the nineteenth century.

At that time they were so well known that their picture - the original of the print appearing on the cover - was preserved even in families unconnected with the Gross family by blood.

My own copy came from great-aunts on my father's side, although I am descended from the Gross family on my mother's side only.

The following notes are taken, with a few changes and corrections, from an article in a Cape Cod newspaper published at Barnstable in November, 1896, the only known copy of which is now in the possession of Miss Clara Steele of Brookline, one of the descendants of the family:

"In the right arm of Massachusetts, known as Cape Cod, and encircling Cape Cod Bay, nestling in the town of Wellfleet, like jewels in the hollow of the hand, are fifteen fresh water ponds, seven of which are of more than usual size. The largest of these is Gull Pond. From the brow of the hill overlooking this pond one of the finest views can be obtained, taking in interesting sections of lakelet, hill, and vale, while eastward rolls the broad Atlantic.

"This is Gross's hill. At the foot of this hill, a century or more ago, lived Thomas and Abigail Gross. They were

the parents of fourteen children, ten girls and four boys. The ten daughters of this remarkable family, known as the 'Ten Sisters,' whose picture, copied from a daguerreotype, is published with this issue, are worthy of more than passing notice, and have at other times and in various papers, been the subject of much comment and favorable note. The ages of these sisters at the time at which this daguerreotype was taken ranged from eighty-three to fifty-six.

"The occasion on which the picture was taken was the first time the ten sisters had all been together in their lives, the older ones having married and left home, and never having all been at home together since the younger ones were born. The trip to Boston was taken for the special purpose of being all together at this time.

"The railroad extending only to Yarmouth, the journey was taken by stage, a special stage having been provided by 'Uncle Zeb,' a well-known stage-driver of the time. The return is thought to have been made by packet.

"A few moments in studying the picture, as well as the lives of those who form it, may be profitably spent. The traits of conscientious precision which mark the family even to this later generation, are apparent on every hand.

"Bear in mind that in the old daguerreotype process all pictures are reversed. So that while the ages now run from right to left, the family originally seated themselves from left to right, 'according to print.' Hold the picture to the mirror and you get the effect.

"Seated in front and at your right is 'Aunt Lurania,' familiarly so called. Next, Abigail, who married Thomas Barge, and Sarah, called Sally, whose firm-set lips express the courage and determination for which she was famed. It will be noticed by our readers that the three oldest, in consideration of their great age, are given seats in front, while it will not be noticed at first glance, or scarcely believed at the second, that the ages of the three are respectively eighty-three, eighty-one, and seventy-seven.

"The next four older are seated on stools or higher chairs behind, save Aunt Cynthia, the strong minded one, who determinedly discards hers. Speak not of the new woman. Aunt Cynthia rode a side-saddle before bicycles were thought of, and riding horseback over the sands of Wellfleet, carried pills and peace to many an aching heart and troubled home. The three at the right of Cynthia are 'Polly,' known as Mary, Rebecca, and Bethiah, whose ages including Cynthia and beginning with Bethiah are respectively seventy-five, sixty-seven, sixty-five, and sixty-four.

"Standing at the back of these four are Thankful, Deborah, and Maria, aged respectively sixty-two, sixty-one, and fifty-six.

"Maria Atkins, being the youngest, had outlived the age where caps were assumed at thirty, and has arrived at the age of fifty-six without wearing a cap; while it will be noticed that Deborah, only five years her senior, wears the customary cap *without* tying the strings, and Thankful, but one year older, wears broad strings *tied*. The

peaceful look of the two ministers' wives, Thankful and Mary, and the prophetic look of the 'doctor' are something interesting to observe.

"The picture was taken about the year 1850, and in that year *the Boston Herald* published an article relating to the fact. The picture was on exhibition at the door of the artist and attracted a great deal of interest at the time. The sisters were all members of the Methodist Episcopal church, all singers, all married, and all had children but one.

"Several concerts were given by them, during their visit, at the homes of relatives and friends. It is said that one of the hymns sung at the last one of these concerts was 'When Shall We All Meet Again?'"

"Two brothers of the family, Hincks and Jonathan, lived to be over eighty years of age. Thomas, at the age of fifty years, was drowned in Provincetown harbor. A former Hincks died in infancy.

The following table, containing the vital statistics of the Gross family from the records of the town of Wellfleet, recorded by Samuel Waterman, town clerk, was copied by Rev. Bartholomew Otheman in 1856, and has been retained by members of the family:

"**Lurania**, born Jan. 3, 1767, died 1856. Married Eleazer Higgins of Wellfleet; had ten children.

"**Abigail**, born July 11, 1769, died 1854. Married Thomas Barge of Scituate; had two children.

“**Sarah**, called **Sally**, born Jan. 28, 1773, died 1867. Married Joseph Ryder, afterwards married John Chipman, both of Wellfleet; had no children.

“**Bethiah**, born June 18, 1775, died 1868. Married Micah Dyer, Wellfleet; had ten children.

“**Rebecca Young**, born March 10, 1783. Married Capt. John Barnicoat; had one child. Lived in Charlestown.

“**Polly Stickney**, called **Mary**, born June 11, 1785, died 1876. Married Frank Cartwright of Newburyport, afterwards married Rev. Bartholomew Otheman, Methodist preacher, at one time presiding elder, Cape District; had four children.

“**Cynthia**, born July 4, 1786, died 1865, was a doctor. Married Richard Atwood; had three children.

“**Thankful**, born March 4, 1788, died 1872. Married Elijah Willard, itinerant Methodist preacher; had ten children.

“**Deborah**, born July 22, 1789, died 1882. Married Daniel Paine, afterwards married Richard Paine, both of Truro; had two children.

“**Miriam**, called **Maria**, born Aug. 27, 1794, died March 28, 1877. Married Freeman Atkins of Provincetown. Had two children.

The births of the four sons were as follows: **Hincks**, Dec. 19, 1770; **Thomas**, April 13, 1778; **Hincks**, Nov. 17, 1780; **Jonathan**, Oct. 15, 1791.

“Of the ten sisters, four lived to be over ninety, four lived to be over eighty, and two to be seventy-nine years of age.

“**Lurania** was the grandmother of Rev. Dr. George M. Steele, former principal of Wilbraham Academy, and of Francis Asbury Steele, and the great-grandmother of the late Helen Steele Fisk, first wife of Everett O. Fisk of Boston.

“**Abigail** was the grandmother of Rev. W. S. Studley.

“**Bethiah** was the mother of ten children, and during her life is said to have read the Bible through seventy times.

“**Mary** was the mother of Mrs. Abel Stevens, wife of Abel Stevens, the historian of Methodism.

“**Deborah** has the distinction to have been born the year in which George Washington was chosen president.

“**Bethiah** was born the day after the battle of Bunker Hill. She was the grandmother of the late Mrs. C. Edwin Miles, wife of Dr. C. Edwin Miles, of Winthrop Street Church, Roxbury.

“While these important events of our country were going on, Thomas and Abigail were rendering service to their country by contributing to its future citizenship a mighty force.

“Abigail, the mother of these fourteen children, died in 1835, in the eighty-eighth year of her age. She is said to have been a woman of superior abilities, devoted to God, and efficient in His service and the church to which she belonged, being one of the three original members which the Methodist class was organized in Wellfleet.

“Thomas, some ten years her senior, was deacon in the Congregational church in Wellfleet, but afterwards connected himself with the Methodist Episcopal Church. He died at seventy-seven years of age. Activity and longevity seem to be marked family traits.

“The engagement ring of Abigail is still in existence and is cherished by the members of the family in whose possession it is.

“The marriage of Abigail occurred in the sixteenth year of her age.

“The ten sisters are described as persons of excellent judgment, earnest and cheerful piety, taking a deep interest in public affairs, and among the most hearty people socially in the world.

“The death of Abigail (Mrs. Barge), the oldest but one of the ten sisters, which occurred in 1854, was the first break in the family circle.

“Lurania, the eldest of the sisters, whose death occurred two years later, was said at the time of her death to have 120 living descendants, while many hundred people claimed kinship to her by blood.

“The family claim relationship to the royal family of the Hawaiian Islands through John Young, alias David Young, who was governor of the island and grandfather to the late Queen Emma, wife of Kamehameha IV. David Young, brother of Abigail, mother of the ten sisters, who was the daughter of John and Rebecca (Harding) Young, sailed from Cape Cod in 1789 as boatswain of the ship ‘Eleanor,’ Captain Metcalf - changed his name to John Young on the voyage.

“A year later the ship dropped anchor at the Hawaiian Islands. For some reason, either through the vessel being wrecked or by a quarrel between the captain of the ship and the natives, as by some stated, the ship leaving suddenly, John Young was detained on shore and would have been killed by the natives but for the daughter of the king, Kamehameha I., whom he afterwards married.

“The king soon saw the advantage there would be in having the skill and intelligence of the white man in dealing with other white men coming to his island kingdom. John, alias David, became thus the trusted confidant and chief adviser to the king.

“Through Young’s influence Christianity was established, he being the first to do anything in the direction of civilizing the people. He built the first house on the island, the ruins of which are still sacredly preserved. It is said a messenger from John, alias David, was once sent to confer with his family here.

“The Gross family, the original name of which is said to be La Grace, are of Norman French descent and claim to trace their ancestry back to William the Conqueror. Clement, the great-great-grandfather of Deacon Thomas Gross, came with his father, Isaac, and his mother Anne from England to Boston about the year 1630.

“Among the children of the ten sisters living in 1896 were Mrs. Hannah Bacon, Boston, aged eighty-eight, daughter of **Lurania**; Mrs. Minerva S. Oliver of San Francisco, aged eighty-nine, Mrs. Betsey Rich, Roxbury, aged eighty-one, Mrs. Giles Hopkins, Wellfleet, aged seventy-eight, Mrs. William Dill, Philadelphia, aged seventy-four, daughters of **Bethiah**; Bartholomew Otheman, New Bedford, son of **Mary**; Mrs. Jesse Atwood, Plymouth, daughter of **Cynthia**; Mrs. Matilda Rogers, Lynn, daughter of **Thankful**; Mrs. Rebecca Cutter, Provincetown, daughter of **Maria**; Mrs. Samuel C. Paine of Truro, whose death occurred shortly before 1896 at the age of eighty years, was the last surviving daughter of **Deborah**.

“Of the sons of **Hincks**, brother of the ten sisters, living in 1896, were Sylvanus S. Gross of Provincetown, aged eighty-eight years, and Bartholomew Gross of Boston, aged about eighty.

“Of **Jonathan**, the third brother of the ten sisters, one daughter and two sons were living in 1896, who resided near Cohasset.”

Among the descendants of the family now living and interested to

preserve the memory of one of the most remarkable connections in Methodism, are Mrs. B. F. Jerome and Miss Maria C. Smith of Milford, N. H., descendants of **Lurania**. These ladies probably know as much about the family history as any one at the present time, and will certainly be willing to share their knowledge of facts and personal anecdotes with any other descendants who may not have had the same traditional opportunities. Their brother, the late George Smith, for fifty years a class-leader in Charlestown, should also be mentioned.

For this article, and some of the attendant facts, we are indebted to the Misses Clara and Eva Steele, and Mrs. Harriet Hanson, 55 Naples road, Brookline, also descendants of **Lurania**, and also possessed of many valuable and fading memories.

“Descendants of the ten sisters are to be found from Cape Cod to San Francisco, and from the Golden Gate to the Eastern continent beyond the Western sea. Should any object to the title of the ‘Royal Family’ to which they have attained, no one can deny that the family in numbers can rightfully claim to be the ‘*great gross*’ family of Wellfleet.”

THE NARROW LAND

Folk Chronicles of old Cape Cod

by Elizabeth Reynard

c. 1934

Chapter 4.

II. *Good Wives and Widows*

“Cynthia Gets Her Bonnet”

Midnight; no moon; Cynthia Gross leaned forward in the saddle and touched with her warm, capable hand her little mare's neck. The horse knew the way in the darkness and Cynthia gave her rein.

The young rider, despite enormous vitality and a calm sense of power, was weary in body and soul. Forcing her horse at breakneck pace, she had ridden fifteen miles that day, to reach a woman believed to be dying in childbirth. She had fought to save mother and child, working with the knowledge and daring that made her the best loved midwife and doctor that the Cape has ever known.

Passing by night over treacherous bog-trails, through "Indian Forests", along desolate moors, she frequently had cause for gratitude that her father had taught her the Indian tongue. But before she had practiced for many years, so widely was her skill heralded that those who had no personal knowledge of her, recognized the indomitable little horsewoman with her midwife's bundle strapped at the rear of the saddle and her crisp bonnet mounted high on her smoothly coifed head. Every man and woman on the Cape, one might almost say every living creature, wished Cynthia Gross Godspeed.

Her ability to alleviate human suffering was almost equaled by her proficiency with injured animals and birds. A broken-winged crow, a lame hen, a blind dog waited at her doorstone; and once in the night her little niece, Miriam, sleeping soundly in the feather poster, was ordered to "lie over" while

Aunt Cynthia placed in the "cozy-hole" a tiny, shivering lamb.

Almost a fetish became the belief in her medical prowess; almost a fable the story of her midwifery: five hundred babies brought out of the womb, often in homes of poverty without convenience or resource; and by her capable, cool ministration, never a mother lost.

As she rode toward home that night, her level eyes peered into the blackness of the highroad. She had won a sharp battle with death, but she ached in every bone.

Wellfleet Methodist Church loomed against the sky. Past the Meeting House the mare would turn into the shortcut through the cemetery, then over the hill to Gull Pond, to the farmhouse where Cynthia and her nine sisters lived; all ten of them clear-minded, energetic women, skilled singers and musicians.

Tired as she was, Cynthia remembered her Sunday bonnet with its butterfly bow. After the last Sabbath Meeting, when she discovered how the rain was falling, she had hesitated, blushed a little, turned back into the church and deposited her best bonnet in her pew. Bareheaded she had walked home in the mild summer rain, through the Burying Acre, over the hill, past Gull Pond, from whose dark waters the Gross sisters were said to have stolen the color of their eyes.

Nine of the ten sisters were "overweening of bonnets." The tenth refused to wear one. Cynthia, sharer of the family's competitive enthusiasm,

decided to retrieve her Sabbath Cap before its crisp allurements proved an irresistible temptation to some weak-willed church visitor. In the darkness of clouded midnight, Cynthia dismounted, found the Meeting House door open, and felt her way within.

The mare whinnied nervously; but to the young rider, whose life centered in the life of Cape Methodism, every inch of wall and flooring was familiar. Toward the front of the church she groped, slowly counting pews. Entering the "fourth from the front", she saw a white substance against the bare bench. That would be her Sunday bonnet. Reaching down to "pluck it up", she touched a dead man's face.

"Alas, poor soul," sighed Cynthia Gross, and she felt of the cold features again, to be quite sure that nothing was left to save.

"This must not be our pew," thought she, "I have miscounted in the dark."

So Cynthia entered the next pew and again saw a blurred whiteness, again reaching down to it and touched a dead man's face.

Confusing to the mind at midnight! But Cynthia did not think it so. Instead she thought it was sad to be "laid out" without a burying box or shroud. She surmised that the dead were drowned sailors from some wreck offshore.

"God rest their souls, where is my bonnet?" queried Cynthia anxiously,

then perceived a nodding whiteness suspended from the aisle-post.

Carefully, not to hurt the bow, Cynthia carried her bonnet outside, folded her night-riding-cap and thrust it into her saddle-pocket, donned her precious Sabbath headgear, mounted her mare and rode homeward through night's shadowy trail.

Midwatch: no moon; but Cynthia loitered late in Wellfleet village. Like her sisters who, all nine of them, played musical instruments and "sang like angels", she found life so interesting that occasionally village-marketing was allowed to wait. Also, Aunt Cynthia had received news from Uncle John of Hawaii, the uncle who married a royal princess, and whose granddaughter became a Queen. Cynthia speculated about John. He was a Young, her mother's brother, and unlike herself and her nine sisters (who were descended from William the Conqueror through the Norman family of La Grasse), John was "off-Cape minded", a condition of brain likely to induce sin.

Swung across her shoulders by a rope, Cynthia had carried a rocking chair on her four mile walk to the village. She intended to have the seat "rushed over", and it had not occurred to her to take her mare on such a local errand. The rushman, gone from home, would not return until after dusk; so Aunt Cynthia "visited around", supped, and waited for his coming. He set to work at first-hour-night and Cynthia, now known as Mistress Atwood, discussed, with pride tempered by reserve, the problems of life in Hawaii.

The rushman before he sprained his back had been a deep-sea sailor. Ladies in “them isles”, he remembered, wore grass around the midriff. “Plaited grass?” questioned Cynthia, but the rushman thought it was a fringe.

“No reason why they should not plait it, neat and firm, like Indian baskets. They could have good skirts if they wanted them.”

Her fears for Uncle John redoubled. She would have to get the next “Cap’n out” to carry with him some Methodist pamphlets to steady John’s mind.

When the chair was done to her liking, she strapped it over her shoulder and started for Gull Pond. A high mist blurred the stars and in the Burying Acres Aunt Cynthia lost her path, became confused, and wandered among the tombstones, striking now one, now another, with the long rockers of the chair. Unseemly to be whacking the stones of the quiet “Judgment Houses”, as if knocking for entrance! Also, Cynthia thought of the scars on the tips of her favorite rocker.

Weatherwise, as are all Cape folk, who get cock eyes from keeping one orb trained on the doings of the Heavens and the other on the sea, Cynthia recalled that the moon would be up in about an hour’s time. “Tis quiet here in the Burying Acres, a good place to knit a stint.” She put down her chair where the turf was even and sat, rocking back and forth, knitting even rows. “Poor souls,” said she, of the unseen dead, “’tis little they get of

pleasure-biding; what with all the weepy women, and the new black wagons. ‘Tis a bit mournful and damp here. I should have come visiting before.” As if something in the way of entertainment were expected of her (all the Gross sisters were invited to sing wherever they “stopped”), Aunt Cynthia, rocking between rows of tombstones, knitting a “saque” for young Maria, sang in her clear, firm voice: “See Gideon going forth to fight.”

A cheerful tune, it suggested action comforting to sailor boys who must find it long waiting for the bright call of Gabriel. After she had finished her song, Aunt Cynthia allowed a decent interval for applause and murmurings. then she “obleeged” with another: “You touch one string and the whole will ring, Sing glory Hallelujah!” The tune reminded her of Sister Deborah whose favorite song it was; and also of Maria, the “baby” sister who lived in Provincetown, refused to wear a cap, and was “prideful of her voice.” Once when someone remarked to tease her that the same tune was rendered more gracefully by a rival, Maria smoothed her skirts and answered, “But *I* descend from William the Conqueror.

Aunt Cynthia chuckled. Bethia, the “brainy” sister, declared that Maria was an “illogical popinjay” whose wits had been “put in with the bread and took out with the cake.” But Cynthia, who defended the “baby”, knew that the well-springs of Maria’s response had naught to do with logic.

Bethia, for all her “book-larning” (seventy times she read the Bible through, and was an expert on the

“Geography of the Heavens” and the “Chronology of the Bible”), had not the curious understanding of human impulses and desires that belonged to Cynthia, perhaps because Bethia had not seen so much of human suffering. She had even reproved Lurania, the eldest, who read only “good authors, and refused to countenance Shakespeare, for quoting from the censured playwright. Lurania answered: “If it wasn’t in the Bible it ought to be,” and Bethia could not see, thereafter, why Lurania still refused to read Shakespeare. But Aunt Cynthia knew. The reason was not explainable; but it was part of Lurania.

The moon peered mistily over the seaward hill. Cynthia rose, pocketed her knitting, and slung the chair over her back. Tombstones now shone gray against the people earth below them. Aunt Cynthia regained her path. In the flood of a rising moon she walked over the hill.

Midnight; no moon; mischief was abroad, though, and so was a quaint old lady, her capstrings tied under her chin, her lace house-bonnet carried in a small round box in her hand. Her compact body, clothed in rustling mohair, moved slowly through the Burying Acre. The fame of her, the fearlessness, the shrewdness and the wonder, had gone abroad and stirred in youth a certain natural skepticism.

Behind a gravestone lurked, waiting, a fearsome form with horns and a tail and a blue aura of sulphur. Knowledge it had of how the sisters believed in apparitions; of how Maria, the youngest, who married a

Provincetown captain and lived on the desolate harbour-point, had been sorely troubled by ghosts. One day she had lost her sympathy for the scrambling, scratching souls of the departed and she cried in her clear voice, “Get ye gone, Evil Ones!” The “sperrits” fled away.-

Aunt Cynthia, too, for all her modern notions of medicine, was Methodist at heart and believed in the implications of horns, a tail and sulphur. Her eyes, unequipped with “specs”, were not as keen as in youth. So when Greataunt Cynthia, at moonless midnight, taking the shortcut through the cemetery, saw bluefire flash and a sinister phantom emerge from the depths of a crumbling tomb, she queried: “Who might that be?”

“Madam, I am the Devil.”

Cynthia paused. Her voice, when she spoke, was warm with the deep compassion of age.

“Alas, poor soul, I pity thee.”

Quietly she continued on her way through the shortcut in the Burying Acre.

THE HINCKS GROSS PEAR TREE

The early settlers devoted much attention to planting orchards. Every house was located with this special reference. Owing to virgin soil, the protection by the original forest, the fruit-trees of the first hundred years and more, grew large, and yielded freely of fine, fair fruit.

Some of the trees grew to prodigious size. A pear-tree known to be growing when the town was settled (1709), is still flourishing (1883) in the orchard of the late Hincks Gross. It is in a deep valley, protected by the surrounding hills, its roots striking deep into living water springs.

In 1812, as it had not borne fruit for some years, it was proposed to cut it down. Better council, however, prevailed. In gratitude for its preservation, for more than sixty years it has never failed a bountiful yield.

The tree is tall and symmetrical, giving no sign of decay, and when in full blossom is a mountain of beauty.

Concerning this tree, there is a tradition that one of the *Mayflower* party brought it from England, promising to plant it in the New world the first opportunity. That during the second visit to Truro, on the journey up the river in pursuit of fresh water springs, perceiving a favorable spot, they fulfilled their promise.

In favor of this story it may be said that the tree is but a short distance from the river banks, and the path of the

company must have been a few rods only from the place.

The property is now in possession of Dr. O. R. Gross of New York.

This story is an interesting one. Hincks and his ten sisters are very distant twigs on the family tree, but we do share commons ancestors - Clement Gross, Isaac Gross, and William the Conqueror.

The Truro connection is pertinent.

Among my family heirlooms is the cane and walking stick collection which belonged to my great-grandfather and my grandfather, Joshua H. Davis, Sr. and Jr. One of these walking sticks is identified as being carved from the wood of the famous Hincks Gross pear tree.



THE HINCKS GROSS PEAR-TREE, 1882.

Ruth Baker Hinckley Holsbery

The Family Centenarian

1810 - 1910

Ruth Hinckley Holsbery
&
Joshua Hinckley Davis, Sr.
were first cousins

Joshua's mother Azubah Hinckley
&
Ruth's father Joshua Hinckley
were sister & brother

Ruth and Joshua were the longest-lived cousins of their generation. Joshua was almost 99 when he died in 1913.



DAY POST, JANUA

CAPE WOMAN TO REACH CENTURY MARK

Mrs. Ruth Holsbery
Striking Example of
Health in Old Age

On a hill overlooking Cape Cod Bay, in the little town of Truro, lives Mrs. Ruth Baker Holsbery, who in a few months will pass the century milestone in age.

Mrs. Holsbery is the oldest person who has ever lived in Truro. She was found seated comfortably by the window, where for 78 years she has daily watched the setting sun.

A PLEASING PERSONALITY

Tall, slight and dignified with the burden of nearly 100 years resting lightly upon her she arose to greet the reporter. She is erect and not the slightest tremor is perceptible in either her hand or her voice. Dressed with much taste in a dark dress with a dainty black lace cap with lavender trimmings covering her head and wearing quaint ear rings, she looked to be a woman in the early '80s. It can truly be said of her that she is, with the exception of a slight deafness, in possession of all her faculties.

She reads a Psalm every day as well as her favorite newspaper. She is not only interested in the domestic news but the foreign news claims her share of attention.

In her early youth she memorized 535 verses in the Bible, all of the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, which she recites as well today as years ago.

She is a direct descendant of Governor Hinckley, last Governor of Plymouth colony.

One of a family of six, Mrs. Holsbery, the daughter of Thankful (Baker) and Joshua Hinckley, was born May 5, 1810. She distinctly remembers hearing her father talk of the Revolutionary war and of the great rejoicing in New York when the statue of King George was torn down.

During the war of 1812-15 the British ships were anchored in the bay near her home. She recalls with much merriment one day when the officers came ashore, causing much terror among the inhabitants, so much in fact that the members of her family locked the doors and went up stairs; but feeling no fear herself, Mrs. Holsbery and her little cousin went out and met them and made a courtesy to which the officers very respectfully raised their hats. She remembers that the officers were always gentlemen and paid liberally for all they took, though it was often a man's best cow or pig.

During the winter of 1816 the "great sickness" prevailed; when 40 people, mostly heads of families, died in the town, among the number being her father, leaving her mother, then 29 years of age, to rear the family.

It was therefore necessary to practise the strictest economy, so that in her childhood days a goose quill and paper were luxuries. Little Ruth, therefore, had to be content to write with a hen's quill, and her letters were learned by smoothing a place in the sand and marking with a stick or her finger.

In 1836 she joined the Congregational Church and has ever maintained a deep interest in all its work.

She taught school in 1830-31. Her pupils numbered 50, from whom she received the ample remuneration of nine shillings a term per head.

On Dec. 22, 1831, she was married to Henry Holsbery and came to the house where she now lives. She had four children, Thankful Hinckley, who married Isaac Tyler and resides in Provincetown; Joshua Hinckley, lost at sea at the age of 24 in the schooner A. N. Jefferson; Henry Baker and Betsey Hinckley.

The two later children have always lived with their mother in Truro, Miss Holsbery having taught school in that town for 45 years, resigning the position last year.

Mrs. Holsbery has had eight grandchildren, five of whom are living, and five great-grandchildren, three of whom are now alive. Mr. Holsbery died in 1885. The only time in her long life when Mrs. Holsbery ever left the Cape was in 1848, when she visited Boston, going in a fishing vessel in a severe snow storm. She has never had any desire to travel and does not like things changed.

She said with characteristic wit: "People like to change things so well, I always considered it a good thing that they could not change the sun or moon. If they could do so, there would not be enough left of either to make a star."

Tenderly cared for by her devoted son and daughter, surrounded by loving friends, demanding by her exemplary life the respect and love of all who know her, she is one of the best examples of longevity in New England.

A VISIT WITH
THE PETERSON FAMILY
OF
TRURO
CAPE COD
MASSACHUSETTS



POST VILLAGE, TRURO, MASS.



John Peterson
1800 - 1872



Elizabeth Gross Lombard Peterson
1796 - 1874



Peterson Home
Truro, Cape Cod, Massachusetts

It's time to revisit the Peterson family.

1813 Elizabeth Gross married Thomas Lombard

1814 Sally Lombard was born

1816 Betsey Lombard was born

1818 Anna Gross Lombard was born *(Anna is my great-grandmother. She married Joshua Hinckley Davis, Sr., the family historian.)*

1819 Thomas Lombard was lost at sea

1821 Widow Elizabeth Gross Lombard (27) married John Peterson (21)

1822 Thomas Lombard Peterson was born *(He was named for his mother's first husband.)*

1824 John William Peterson was born *(He was lost at sea at age 17 in the Memorable Gale of 1841.)*

1827 Emily Peterson was born *(She died in 1829.)*

1830 Emily Peterson was born

1834-5 Elisha Gross Peterson was born

Two children of the second marriage, **Thomas and Emily** were both married in 1847. I think these siblings were close. They both named children after each other, i.e., Emily Elizabeth Peterson was **Thomas's** daughter, and Joshua Thomas Small was **Emily's** son.

Bear in mind these two people were the brother and sister of Joshua H. Davis's wife, Anna G. Lombard Davis. *Thomas* was his brother-in-law, and *Emily* was his sister-in-law.

In the *Book of Family History* by Joshua H. Davis, the Peterson family is barely paid lip service. What was his reason for this?

Take a large pot. Add equal measures of Truro Vital Records and what *wasn't* recorded in the family history. Add snippets of Mary Davis Dyar's journal and Shebna Rich's Truro History, a few photographs and flavor with poetry. Let this mixture set. Frost with educated guesswork, sprinkle on some conjecture, and add a large dollop of pure gall (this writer's interpretation) for garnish.

And now let's step into the time machine and visit the Truro Petersons in the early part of the 19th Century. We'll call on **Emily Peterson Small** first.



EMILY PETERSON SMALL
1830 - 1850

Emily had a short tragic life. In 1847, when she was 16 or 17, she married a man at least 10 years her senior. This marriage was probably one of necessity. The age gap was an anomaly for marriages between Truro's young people. Joshua Small, Jr. was a teacher and a carpenter. He may have seduced his young pupil; or he may have been a colleague of John Peterson who was also a carpenter. Perhaps he had to resign his teaching profession and start over as a carpenter when he married Emily.

Emily and Joshua's baby girl died in 1848. In February of 1850 she gave birth to her son Joshua Thomas Small. Four weeks later Joshua Small drowned in Cape Cod Bay. Baby Joshua died at 8 months in October. **Emily** died in 1850, too, but we don't know how or when. Emily's 1850 portrait shows a beautiful young girl who was in desperate straits. Suicide is not out of the question. In an era of emotional epitaphs, their tombstone is stark.

Joshua Small, Jr.

1820 - 1850

Emily

Wife of

Joshua Small, Jr.

1830 - 1850

How did our family historians record this? JHD., Sr. only listed the Peterson children and said, "**Emily** married Joshua Small of Truro." His son, my grandfather Joshua H. Davis, Jr., said **Emily** "married Joshua Small, Jr. who was washed overboard from the packet on its passage to Boston."

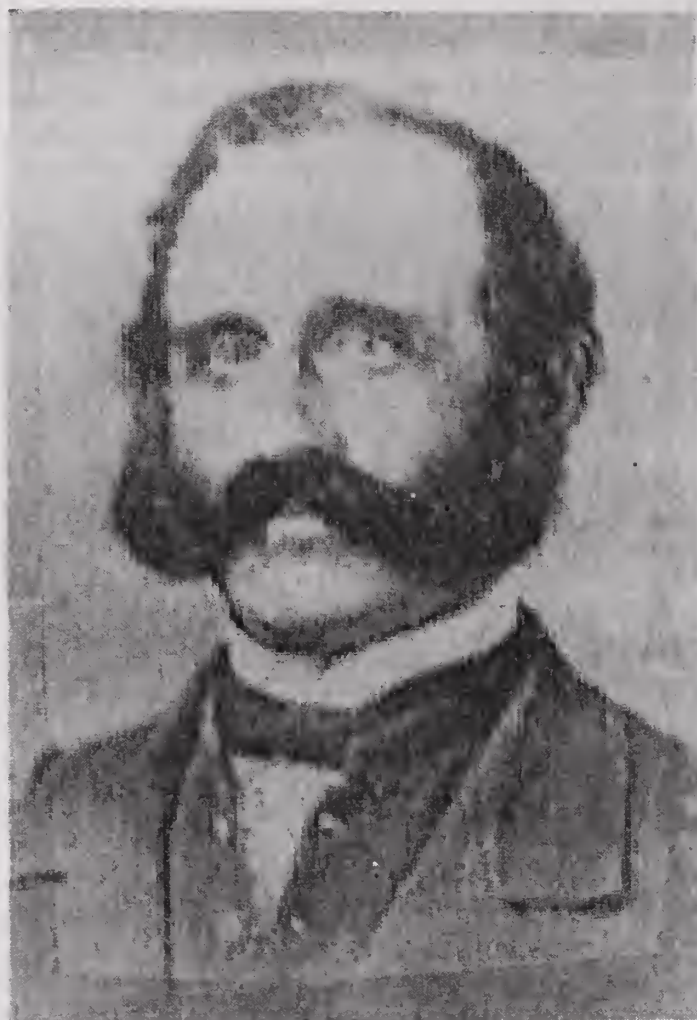
Notice how the attention was shifted away from **Emily** to the tragic death of her husband? Were not the deaths of two babies and a very young sister-in-law equally tragic and noteworthy? Was suicide too shameful to mention? **This was his wife's sister!**

The old naming patterns came into play as evidenced by these births recorded in the Truro Vital Records:

Oct. 14, 1850	Joshua Small McDonald was born to an unrelated family.
Mar. 20, 1851	Emily Peterson Small was born to Isaac & Hannah Small
July 27, 1852	Emily Small Davis was born to Joshua H. & Anna Davis
Nov. 11, 1853	Joshua Thomas Small was born to Thomas & Maria Small

The dead were symbolically restored. Interestingly, the Small family named their daughter Emily Peterson, whereas the Davises named theirs Emily Small. One wonders how much "discussion" went on in the Davis family when deciding upon this name.

Now we'll let **Emily Peterson Small** and her family rest in peace as we take a look at her older brother **Thomas Lombard Peterson**.



THOMAS LOMBARD PETERSON
1822 - 1863

COMMANDER THOMAS L. PETERSON, April 1862, entered the Navy. In July he was stationed on the flag-ship *Hartford*. February 22, 1863, was promoted as acting master commander, and ordered on gunboat D _____ in the Bay of Mexico. March 28, 1863, at Pattersonville, Texas, while standing by the pilot giving orders, was struck in the breast by a ball, from which he fell dead on the spot, aged 41 years. Was buried at Brashear City, now Morgan City, La. Commander Peterson was a brave and gallant officer. His position fairly won, but heeding no danger, he ventured beyond orders, and fell a sacrifice to his ambition to win fresh honor.

1822 **Thomas Lombard Peterson** was born

1863 **Thomas Lombard Peterson**, naval commander, died in the Gulf of Mexico during the Civil War.

Our family historians, again, wasted little ink on **Thomas L. Peterson**. Attention was directed toward his patriot's death, but he remained one-dimensional until the Truro Vital records were examined. Here is what they say about him.

1822 Born

1847 Married to Ruth A. Hughes (19) *(Ruth A. (Atkins?) Hughes was the daughter of Atkins & Jerusha Hughes. Widow Jerusha Hughes (30) married Esquire James Small (48), in 1835. Ruth was about 7, and her brother Horace Hughes was about 11. Esquire James Small served in the state legislature, and as its oldest member opened the session near the end of his life. He died in 1874 at 86.)*

1849 Emily Elizabeth Peterson was born

1851 Sarah Bailey Peterson was born

1853 Emma Isadore Peterson was born

1856 Thomas Atkins Peterson was born

1861 Alice "Abbie" Morton Peterson was born

1863 **Thomas Lombard Peterson was killed in the Civil War.**

Ruth was a 36-year-old widow with five children ranging in age from 14 months to 13 years. Where does this family live? In the 1850 Truro Census, **Thomas**, Ruth and Emily E. were renting from/boarding with Widow Rebecca Snow (41). Whether they ever owned their own home will be unknown until more town records are available.

The 1850 census showed Esq. James (Farmer, 63) and Jerusha (45) living on a farm with Horace Hughes (Farmer, 26), Isaac Small (5), and James Carroll (26, Labourer). Bless the Esquire's heart! 5-year-old Isaac was his son by Jerusha!

According to the same census, John and Elizabeth Peterson have three people living in their large house - themselves and Elizabeth's widowed mother Anna Lombard Gross Bush Smith. Anna Smith died in 1853. Their 15- or 16-year-old son Elisha Gross Peterson is not accounted for. He may have been at sea and missed the census taker.

It is my opinion that the **Thomas Peterson** family moved in with the senior Petersons. This could have been after **Thomas's** death, as soon as he went away to war, or any time before that.

I base this on the following:

1. Ruth Peterson had no husband to support her and her five children. A widow's pension would have been scanty or nonexistent in 1863.
2. Ruth's mother is 58 and the Esquire is about 75. They are probably in no position, or have the inclination, to open their farm home to Ruth and her brood.
3. Elizabeth and John's house was large enough to accommodate six extra people. Eight children grew up there. The Peterson family kept getting smaller instead of multiplying. Here was an opportunity to gather some of the remnants and make a home for them.
4. Ruth Peterson had not remarried as late as 1874. She shared in 1/5 of John Peterson's estate indicating familial closeness.
5. In 1866, Mary Davis of Somerville (JHD, Sr.'s daughter) recorded a delightful August trip to Truro in her journal.

"We ate supper, washed the dishes, and took a walk over the hill with Emily Peterson and her baby Lilly."

Two days later "...a little before three o'clock..." Mary, her friend Emily Mills, and Emily Peterson "...started for our walk..." She went on to tell about a wonderful afternoon going barefoot, wading in the fish weir, and packing sand in their shoes all the way back to Grandmother Peterson's house.

This establishes the presence of Emily E. and her baby in the house while Mary was visiting.

A couple of stray lines in Mary's journal are revealing.

"After doing domestic duty..."

"After having taken breakfast, and done our morning work, agreeably to our promise to mother, we went down to the shore...."

Can't you imagine Mary's mother (Grandmother Peterson's daughter Anna Davis) giving instructions before Mary and her friend Emily Mills left for their visit to Truro?

"Be sure to help your grandmother all you can."

"Don't leave all the work for her."

"Don't be a burden."

"Be a good guest."

Grandmother Peterson was 72-years-old. She was vigorous, healthy, and strong as an ox. Under ordinary circumstances, wouldn't a grandmother revel in having Mary and her friend visit? Mary was not a frequent Truro visitor. She was one of the Davis grandchildren living in Somerville. Wouldn't this have been an ideal time for a grandmother to fuss over a seldom seen grandchild?

Why was it so important Mary help all she could with the work? It's probably because there was a houseful of Peterson grandchildren and a great-grandchild, too.

Sometimes the most innocuous statement is the most revealing. The same day Mary, Emily Mills, and Emily Peterson went wading in the weir, "*...Grandmother went berrying...and beat us all by getting four quarts of berries.*"

Who was watching the baby?

Four quarts of berries is a lot. How many mouths had to be fed three times a day?

Why was Grandmother Peterson picking berries if there was a houseful of Peterson grandkids to do it? Maybe Grandmother needed some time for herself, some peace and quiet, and picking berries was relaxing for her.

Mary's brother Solomon was also visiting in Truro at this time, though I don't believe he stayed at Petersons. One day Solomon and his friends went gunning and shot enough blackbirds for Grandmother to make pies. Mary poked fun at how small the birds were, but they were probably appreciated by Grandma P. Mary mentioned one of Solomon's friends staying for supper, but one more mouth probably wouldn't have made much difference, and it was a chance for Grandma P. to coddle the Davis kids.

Notice, too, that Mary's social activities were **away** from the house. She paid calls on many people and made many outings, but friends did **not** come in droves to the Petersons. Toward the end of the two weeks Mary stayed in Truro, she was staying at other relatives' homes.

Now we need to clear up the mention of Emily Peterson and her baby. Here's what the Vital Records had to say:

February 26, 1865 - **Illegitimate**

Lillie Auford (Emily E. Peterson)

Emily Elizabeth Peterson gave birth at the age of 15 years, 5 months. Auford was the surname of the baby's father, and the child's legal name was Lillie Auford Peterson. I found two fleeting references to Truro people named Auford, but neither were pertinent to this situation. Suffice it to say, there were Aufords in the area, and one of them fathered Emily E.'s baby.

Here's everything I could find about the five children of Thomas and Ruth A. Hughes Peterson.

1. Emily Elizabeth Peterson
 Sept. 16, 1849 - Born
 Feb. 26, 1865 - Gives birth to Lillie Auford Peterson
 Nov. 24, 1872 - Lillie died
 June 29, 1873 - Married Frank Rich (26). Emily E. was 23.
 May 15, 1874 - Gives birth to Emma Alice Rich (*11 mos. after wedding*)
2. Sarah Bailey Peterson
 Aug. 15, 1851 - Born
 Feb. 24, 1871 - Married (at 19) to Samuel L. Grove (21)
 Aug. 23, 1871 - Gives birth to James Emlen Grove (*6 mos. after wedding*)
3. Emma Isadore Peterson
 Dec. 23, 1853 - Born
 Feb. 27, 1871 - Married (at 17) to Joshua A. Rich (23)
 Oct. 7, 1871 - Gives birth to John William Rich (*7 mos. after wedding*)
 (*This baby is named for the uncle lost at sea in 1841.*)
4. Thomas Atkins Peterson (*named for his father and Grandfather Hughes*)
 Sept. 11, 1856 - Born
 Apr. 20, 1876 - Married (at 19) to Paulina Anderson (21)
 Nov. 7, 1876 - Stillborn son (*7 mos. after wedding*)
5. Alice "Abbie" Morton Peterson
 Dec. 3, 1861 - Born
 Nov. 21, 1880 - Married (at 19) to Samuel Smith (21)
 Mar. 14, 1881 - Gives birth to Nellie Lewis Smith (*4 mos. after wedding*)
 July 6, 1882 - Gives birth to Abbie Atkins Smith

Lillie Auford Peterson died in 1872. Seven months later her mother Emily E. married Frank Rich. Was Frank unwilling to marry a woman with an illegitimate child? Did Frank enter the picture after Lillie died?

Read this page again and ask, **"What's wrong with this picture?"**

It's too easy to play amateur psychologist 150 years after the fact, but I do think a look at the Peterson family dynamics has merit.

When John Peterson married Elizabeth Gross Lombard in 1821, he was 21 years old. Elizabeth was 27 and a widow with three little girls. Within three years of his marriage, John fathered two sons. I have the feeling the three Lombard girls became secondary to him. John's own daughter Emily died before she was two in 1829. The second Emily came along in 1830. By the time Elisha was born in 1834/35, he had indeed proven his manhood.

Thomas Lombard Peterson, the oldest, was probably John's favorite child. As subsequent children died, his status was likely elevated. Look at **Thomas's** photograph. This was no shrinking violet. I see a willful, cocksure man. Shebnah Rich, in his history of Truro, as much as said he was reckless, ambitious, and arrogant. His death was caused by his "...going beyond orders to win fresh honor."

Ruth's world collapsed. She had no husband, no income, and no home. She had five dependent children, and the dominant parent was gone. There was no grave in Truro to visit, as **Thomas** was buried in Texas. Grandfather Peterson was in his 60's, and may have been a difficult man to live with. That may have been the reason the Peterson kids "went looking for love in all the wrong places."

Maybe pregnancies and early marriages were the means to escape an unpleasant home. Maybe these kids just caved in to the family "reputation." Maybe they all just had active libidos. Maybe, maybe, maybe. We'll never know, just surmise.

Two poems written by **Anna Gross Lombard** follow. I think they were composed when she was about 16, as they were written in the same exquisite penmanship as the school exercises she saved in her lap desk. The desk was made for her by her sweetheart, **Joshua H. Davis**, in 1835, four years before they were married. The poems are powerfully emotional, yet girlish.

In the first poem **Anna** talks about domestic happiness. Was it lacking in her childhood home, or was her home life harmonious while others were not? She is upset that "truth-tried love" falls victim to "stormy rapture" which shipwrecks "honor, dignity and fair renown." The word "shipwreck" is the perfect segue to the second poem.

Here Anna was crying out for her dead father, Thomas Lombard. Anna was a baby when he was lost at sea, so John Peterson was the "father" she knew all her life. Yet she yearns again for the caresses Thomas gave her as a baby. Once she was aware her "real" father was dead, she wept and asked if he were "conscious of the tears I shed." If she had the choice of living "those few pleasant days again, would she wish them here?" No, she wouldn't. His spirit is free and she would not constrain it "into bonds again."

Domestic happiness, thou only bliss
 Of Paradise, that has survived the fall!
 Though few now taste thee unimpaired and pure,
 Or, tasting, long enjoy thee! Too infirm,
 Or, too incautious, to preserve thy sweet,
 Unmixed with drops of bitter, which neglect
 Or temper sheds into thy crystal cup:
 Thou art the nurse of virtue; in thine arms
 She smiles, appearing, as in truth she is.
 Heaven-born and destined to the skies again.
 Thou art not known where pleasure is adored, -
 That reeling goddess, with her Goneless wars
 And wandering eyes, still leaning on the arm
 Of novelty, her fickle frail support;
 For thou art meek and constant, hating change,
 And finding in the calm of truth-tried love,
 Joys which her stormy rapture never yields.
 Forsaking thee, what shipwreck have we seen,
 Of honor, dignity & fair renown!

(I cannot figure out what Goneless wars are. Perhaps she meant gunless, but her spelling is otherwise perfect. It must have significance since it's capitalized.)

My father! when I learned that thou was dead,
 Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
 Hovered thy spirit oer thy sorrowing child,
 Babe even then, life's journey just begun?
 Could time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,
 When I by thee so fondly was caressed;
 Could those few pleasant days again appear,
 Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?
 I would not trust my heart - the dear delight
 Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might. -
 But, no - what here we call our life is such,
 So little to be loved, and thou so much,
 That I shall ill requite thee to constrain
 Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.

John Peterson was Joshua H. Davis's father-in-law. JHD mentioned that John married Elizabeth. He mentioned that Elizabeth was married six years to her first husband, 51 years to her second husband and that the children gave them a golden wedding anniversary party. Amen. Period. Finis. The End.

On the other hand, Joshua loved his mother-in-law and compared her to the woman in Proverbs whose worth was above rubies. He lauded her disposition, industry, and ingenuity. He applauded her ability to not be vanquished from life's cruel blows.

After John Peterson died in 1872, Elizabeth moved to Somerville to live in the Davis household. Within a year she, too, died. Joshua was truly sad, and stated he wished she could have made her home with them for many years. Several months respite before she died were undoubtedly appreciated by Elizabeth. The past three years included her husband's death, Lillie's death, Peterson grandchildren being married and more great-grandchildren being born (too soon).

John Peterson's estate made no mention of his Truro house. Perhaps it was deeded to Ruth.

Now we need to return to our original query. **Why was there so little mention of the Petersons in the family records?** JHD, Sr. was scrupulously accurate in all the data he recorded. What he didn't say was more revealing. He's the poster boy for *"If you can't say something nice about someone, don't say anything at all."*

He had nothing to say about John Peterson, the Peterson children or the Peterson grandchildren. Unkindness to **Anna** would have been a valid reason. I am sure sexual inpropriety was an anathema to him. Perhaps the example of the Petersons was the reason he had three unmarried daughters living with him for the rest of his days in Somerville, one daughter who didn't marry until she was 30, and a son who married at 37. What a contrast in life styles!

Joshua was not above compromising his ethics, though. His adored mother-in-law was in the same "fix" as the Peterson kids when she married in 1813.

Joshua loved his wife, and he loved his mother-in-law. Anna's older sisters, their husbands and children were welcome guests in the Davis home.

The Davises' youngest son was named Thomas Lombard Davis. The youngest daughter was named Sarah Elizabeth Gross Davis. This harkened back to a purer time when Elizabeth Gross and Thomas Lombard were the original grandparents - before death, remarriage, a step-father, and wayward children entered the picture. No child was named John, and no child had Peterson as part of his name.

Joshua Hinckley Davis, Sr. was there while all of this was going on. Three generations and 150 years later, his great-granddaughter filled in some blanks.

TRURO'S ILLEGITIMATE BIRTHS

Looking something up in vital records is a lot like looking up something in the encyclopedia or on the Internet. On the way to finding your original subject, one gets sidetracked by all kinds of interesting things. The term "illegitimate" alongside the name of Emily E. Peterson's baby made me wonder about the frequency of these births and what happened to the mothers and children afterward. The stories are varied and another example of the saying, "There's nothing new under the sun."

Sept. 4, 1850	Isaac Gates to Cordelia Rich (19)
Sept. 12, 1850	Cordelia Rich died
Feb. 28, 1859	Georgianna Williams Marsh - Illegitimate - to Jane M. Burgess
June 29, 1859	Died - Illegitimate - to Zilpha Knowles
Jan. 14, 1865	Antone - Illegitimate - to Mary Lewis <i>(Father was evidently Portuguese)</i>

Nothing more is known about these girls.

Mar. 3, 1858	William Franklin Young - Illegitimate - to Betsey A. Rich
July 19, 1859	Betsey married Isaiah Young of Provincetown <i>(No rush!)</i>
Aug. 22, 1860	Josiah Lombard Young to Betsey & Isaiah Young
Aug. 8, 1864	Died - Male - Illegitimate - to Hannah L. Coan
Mar. 15, 1865	Died - Male - Illegitimate , 7 mos, 7 ds - Hannah L. Coan <i>(Hannah's sin was recorded twice.)</i>
July 3, 1868	Benjamin Franklin Atkins - Illegitimate - to Hannah Chandler <i>(Hannah was 41 when her son was born. The 1850 census recorded her as a 22-year-old living/working in the home of Samuel Atkins & his wife, a very elderly couple. Chances are a son or grandson of this couple was the baby's father.)</i>
June 29, 1873	Josephine Blake - Illegitimate - to Isabella Rich
July 9, 1873	Isabella married Andrew Blake

Aug. 25, 1873	Aronetta Snow - Illegitimate - to Susan W. Brown
May 18, 1881	Susan married Frederick Nunes (<i>Portuguese?</i>) <i>(This is my favorite "gotcha" story. Susan did not marry the father of her baby, and there was a fellow by the name of <u>Aaron Snow</u>, 5 years older than Susan, who lived in Truro. Need I say more?!)</i>

Aug. 5, 1875	Frederick Wilson - Illegitimate - to Nancy M. Cooper (15)
Nov. 10, 1877	Freddie Cooper - Illegitimate - 2 yrs, 3 mos, 26 ds died
	Mamie Cooper - Illegitimate - died
Apr. 25, 1880	Nancy Cooper married Caleb W. Kerr

And the most complicated story of all....

ca. 1857	Ambrose & Mary E. McIntyre Baker were married
Nov. 4, 1857	Stillborn
Jan. 31, 1859	Angeline Atkins Baker was born Jan. 19, 1877 - Stillborn - Illegitimate Aug. 28, 1878 - Stillborn - Illegitimate Sept. 22, 1878 - Angeline A. Baker died
Aug. 1, 1860	Elmer Ellsworth Baker was born
Nov. 27, 1861	Joanna Baker was born, died 1 mo
Dec. 25, 1862	George Henry Baker & his twin William Freeman Baker were born
Sept. 16, 1863	George Henry Baker died, 8 mos 22 ds
Mar. 25, 1864	Ambrose Baker (28) drowned
June 8, 1866	George Herbert Baker - Illegitimate - born to Mary E. McIntyre Baker
July 6, 1868	Mary E. Baker (29) married Francis Silver (Brazil, 40) <i>(First Truro wife & child of Francis Silver died 2 years prior to this marriage.)</i>
Apr. 25, 1870	Louise Francis Silver was born
Nov. 11, 1884	Mary E. Silver died <i>(The name "Silver" was also spelled "Sylver" and was most likely spelled the way Cape Codders pronounced the actual Portuguese name "Silva.")</i>

INTERESTING MID-CENTURY TRURO NAMES

My perusal of the vital records also revealed dramatic changes from the old naming patterns. The names of patriots and Civil War heroes showed up in boys' names, and girls' names were very different from past generations.

Civil War Names

Apr. 4, 1865 Edward Everett Lombard

He was named for a revered Massachusetts statesman. Edward Everett is better known as the man who gave a two-hour oration at Gettysburg, while Abraham Lincoln's famous address lasted about three minutes.

Nov. 15, 1868 Sherman Grant Rich - Two Union generals in one name!

Aug. 1, 1860 Elmer Ellsworth Baker

This is probably more coincidence than prescience. Elmer Ellsworth was the first Union soldier to die for his country. Elmer Ellsworth Baker was born before the war started.

Patriotic Names

Several boys were given the first and second names of Benjamin Franklin and George Washington. One boy's first two names were James Madison. One girl was blessed with Georgiana Washington.

Portuguese Names

The Portuguese in Truro began to be acknowledged mid-century. The predominant surnames were: Silver, Enos, Antone, and Viera. With few exceptions, male children were named Antone even if their last name was Antone. Antone Antone, Sr. and Antone Antone, Jr. both lived in Truro. The girls had beautiful names such as Fermana and Flemana as well as the traditional Truro names.

"Fad" Names

Isadore/Isidore, Chester and Elmer were numerous. Interestingly, these masculine names were popular middle names for girls.

Post-Civil War Girls' Names:

Girls' names started to be "fun" rather than stodgy. Nicknames and diminutives of "proper" names were bestowed as legal first names: Minnie, Bessie, Nellie, Mattie, Lizzie, Bettie, Janie, Annie, Abbie, and Lillie.

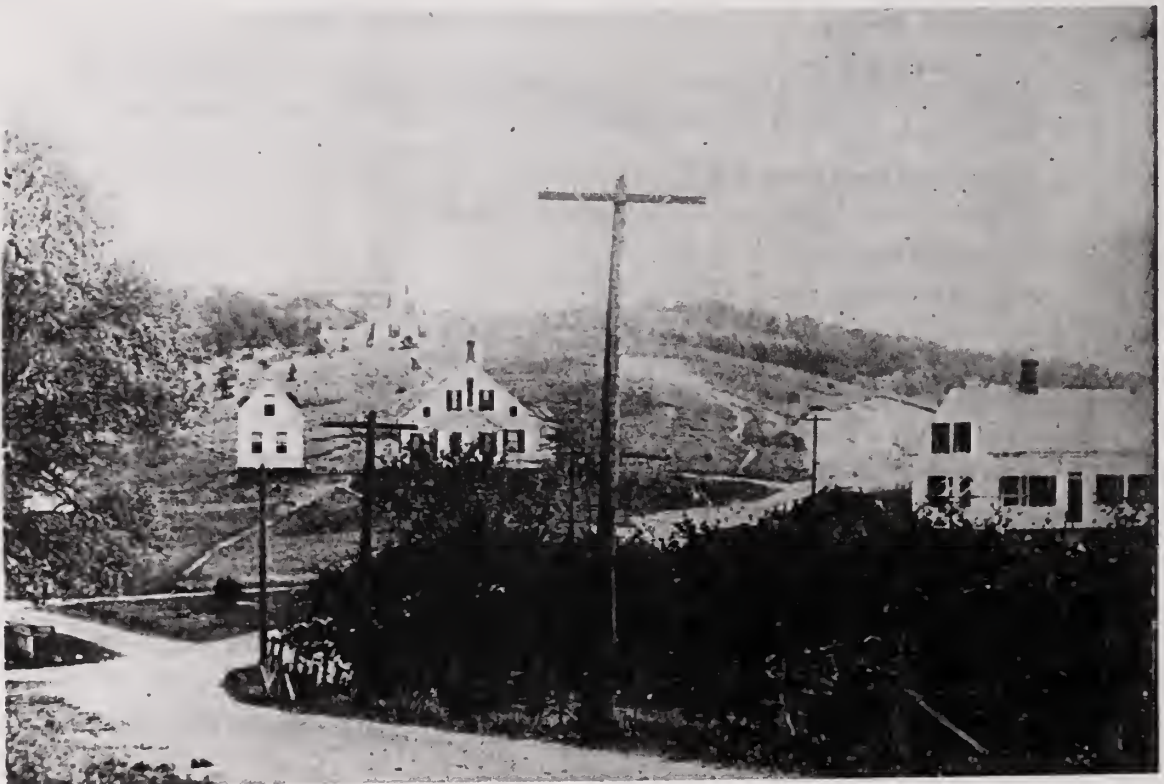
Modern sounding names such as Marjorie, Mary Ann, and Amy were given.

Fancy names such as Linnie Evelyn, Susie May, and Hattie Belle showed up.

A great number of "old lady names" were evident: Edna, Emma, Dora, Ida, Ina, Leona, Mabel, Etta, Florence, Stella, and Blanche. These names must have been popular for two or three generations. They were common names of older woman within my memory.

Interesting/Funny Names:

Cinderella Johnson Rich	
Silverena Nichols French	
Eurecta Kenny Parsons	
Sereno S. Atkins	(Named for his mother Serena)
Erveanna Higgins	
Sherborn Sleeper Collins	(A good baby, no doubt!)
Wealthea Maria Wiley	
Eversleigh Renfrew Laird	
Harlow Truro Sherman	(A true native son!)
Greenleaf Marshall	
Lucy Pea Bangs	(!)



BIOGRAPHY OF
RALPH EMERSON DYAR

1884 - 1955

This short biography was written in 1958 by Ruth Dyar Mendenhall, at the request of her mother, Else Kiesling Dyar. At that time, The Winona Daily News was collecting material for a volume about famous Minnesotans. Publication was planned as part of the Minnesota centennial.

RALPH E. DYAR

Ralph E. Dyar, nationally-known author, playwright, historian, film writer and newspaperman, was born on January 4, 1884 in Dover, Minnesota about thirty miles from Winona.

The Dyar family moved to Winona in 1892, first renting a place they called "the salmon house." In April 1894 they bought the big, three-story, light brown house at 376 West 5th St., which became home for Ralph, his brother Louis, his sisters Annie, Alice and Gladys, his mother Mary Eleanor (Davis) Dyar and his father Emerson Dyar.

Ralph's parents came to Minnesota from New England. His father Emerson Dyar was born in West Freeman, Maine on February 16, 1844. He grew up on the family farm, and began his professional life as a schoolmaster in Maine. He moved to Minnesota in 1866, where he continued to teach school for several years. Entering business, and rising to influence in community affairs, he became a leader in banking and flour-milling, pioneered a telephone line into the Black Hills of South Dakota, and conducted an extensive business along the North Western line in Minnesota and the Dakotas. He represented Olmsted County in the Minnesota Legislature in 1883-84 and 1884-85.

Mary Davis was born on March 18, 1845, at Truro Massachusetts, not far from Plymouth where her ancestors, Stephen Hopkins and his daughter Constance landed from the Mayflower.

Mary loved both art and nature, and combined her talents in charming watercolors. Her girlhood was spent near Boston. In 1873, after she had taught school for a decade, the renowned naturalist Louis Agassiz chose her to be one of the students at his famous summer school on Penikese.

Emerson Dyar and Mary Davis were married on June 24, 1875. Their early married years were spent in Eyota and Dover, Minnesota. Though already in their thirties when they married, they had a family of five children, who in later years distinguished themselves in such lines as drama, literature, journalism, art, law, photography and community service. Emerson died in February 1905, at the family home in Winona. Mary occupied the old home until 1924. Two of her daughters had gone to California; one of them, Alice Dyar Russell, was making a name for herself in the United States and England as a writer of fiction. and was later listed in *Who's Who In America for Women*. Mary Davis Dyar was induced to sell her Winona home and spend her last years in Southern California, where she died in 1931.

Ralph Emerson Dyar, the author-playwright-newspaperman son of Emerson and Mary, is known throughout the United States for his play, "A Voice In The Dark," which had a long run on Broadway in 1919, and for his historical book, "News for an Empire," dealing with Pacific Northwest history, which was published in 1952, as well as for many accomplishments in between.

Ralph was eight years old when he and his family moved to Winona. He

was the next-to-youngest child in the family, a round faced boy with an infectious grin, bright brown eyes, and a shock of unruly black hair.

His lifelong love of the outdoors, which began on the virgin prairies of southern Minnesota, was undoubtedly fostered by the rural charms of Winona in the 1890's as well as by parental leanings. The big yard that surrounded the family home with its wide verandas, was filled with large hard maple trees. Not far away was the Mississippi River. At the foot of the river bluffs in season bloomed waist-high gentians and maiden-hair ferns, wild roses, trilliums, hepaticas, blood roots, jack in the pulpits, and Solomon seal. On top of the bluffs in the early March sun could be found the very first pasque flowers -- a wild flower which fifty years later and 2000 miles westward Ralph managed to grow in his garden for the boyhood memories it recalled.

Like most Winona families of that time, the Dyars had a stable, a horse which Ralph could harness and drive, and a cow which Ralph could milk. In the summer a boy went through the streets of Winona each morning collecting the cows from the residential area. He drove the cows through the streets, and across the old wooden lake bridge, to valley pasturage near the bluffs. The cows were returned to their homes each evening. At a period when it was Ralph's duty to milk the cow before she was taken to pasture, he overslept one morning and found that his bovine charge had already been driven away with the herd. Ralph jumped on his bicycle with a pail over one arm, and pedaled across the bridge to find the cow

and do the milking. Some time later he returned home in disgust with an empty pail. He had learned that a passer-by had noticed the un milked cow, had milked her -- and poured out the milk.

Ralph started his school days in the Dover School House. In Winona, the Dyar children all attended the Normal Practice School through 8th grade, where classes were conducted by a student-teacher and an over-teacher. It was considered a superior elementary education.

Ralph liked to return to his former home in Dover for summer visits, which he spent with "Uncle" Lib and "Aunt" May Ingham, who occupied the Dyar's old house. One summer, with his older brother and another boy, he camped for several weeks on Trempeleau Mountain on the Mississippi. The boys spent much of their time fishing, and discovered an old Indian mound from which they dug some valuable relics.

During his high school years, when his mother was away from home for several months, Ralph assumed the task of baking the family bread. At this skill he was so exacting that he was likened by a sister to "a railroad engineer with his hand at the throttle." It is said that after he married, he taught his bride to bake bread. On the whole, in later life, his talents at cookery were confined to producing delicious meals on camping trips; but his whole-hearted appreciation of home life deepened with the years.

He was graduated from Winona High school in 1902, and entered the University of Minnesota. He contributed

to The Minnesota Daily. Talented in art as well as writing, he was Art Editor of the Junior Class annual, The Gopher. He was literary editor of the Minnesota Magazine, and a member of the Senior Play Committee. The play, "Hicks at College," written by Ralph and two fellow students, was published by the Dramatic Publishing Company, Chicago, and acted by amateur groups throughout the country. In 1907 he was awarded the degree of Bachelor of Arts at the University of Minnesota, and was also elected to Phi Beta Kappa, whose gold key he always wore on his watch chain.

Other writings by Ralph Dyar were finding acceptance by national periodicals including the humorous publication, the old "Life" magazine. In his first year out of college, he was principal of a four-room school in Plains, Montana. Then in 1908, after declining an offer to become superintendent of schools in Potlatch, Idaho, he moved to the state of Washington, where he opened a small advertising agency, and in a few months joined the business department of a large daily newspaper in Spokane.

From this time on, Ralph Dyar's home, business and recreational activities centered in the Spokane country of Eastern Washington. He first lived with his brother Louis in a bachelor establishment among the lovely farms, orchards and pine-wooded hills of Kiesling, a community twelve miles southeast of Spokane. On June 30, 1909, Ralph married Else Josephine Kiesling, for whose father the town was named. Later Louis married Else's sister Ellen.

Else Kiesling Dyar also came from Minnesota. Her parents were natives of Germany. Her father, August Kiesling, was born in Oschatz, Saxony, January 3, 1841. Rudolph's father, August Kiesling, was president of the Colonization Society whose members settled in New Ulm, Brown County, Minnesota, in the late 1850's. Here, on April 20, 1861, Rudolph married Augusta Wilhelmina Held, who had been born on September 14, 1840, in Connstatt, Wurtemberg.

The year after their marriage, New Ulm was the scene of the worst Indian massacre in the history of Minnesota, the settlement being assaulted by a powerful force of heavily-armed Sioux warriors, bent on wiping it out. Rudolph Kiesling joined with other citizen-soldiers in resisting the attack. In the fall of 1862, he enlisted in Company C, Irregular State Militia, and served under its commander, Lieutenant Charles Roos, until the Indian warriors, who at times had the upper hand, were decisively defeated. He was mustered out January 10, 1863. The importance of New Ulm was recognized by the State of Minnesota with a monument on the ground to commemorate the event, and in honor of the brave men who fought there. Mr. and Mrs. Kiesling made many staunch friends in those hard frontier days. Among them was the Brown County superintendent of schools, John Lind, governor of Minnesota from 1899 to 1901.

Else Kiesling was born in New Ulm on November 19, 1887, the youngest of a large family, and moved with her parents to "Spokane Falls" in

1890. She graduated from Spokane High school, taught school, and moved with her family to the fruit ranch in Kiesling, where she met the young advertising man from Winona, Ralph Dyar.

The young couple built a charming two-story home on ten acres of rolling garden, pasture, apple orchard and woodland. Many of their neighbors were relatives, and they had a son and four daughters, who enjoyed pets, the outdoors, and the four seasons.

Ralph Dyar commuted to Spokane by electric train. He forged rapidly ahead on the staff of the Spokesman-Review. He started in the then comparatively new profession of "publicity man." In 1915 he was also put in charge of the promotion of a group of influential farm magazines which covered Washington, Oregon and Idaho. In 1935 he was appointed promotion and research director of the Spokesman-Review, the Spokane Daily Chronicle, and the Pacific-Northwest Farm Trio, a position he held for many years, along with countless special research and promotional jobs, in connection with which he and his department received many awards.

Despite the heavy demands of office and country life, Ralph Dyar was writing in his upstairs study at home. His concentrated creative work would probably have been impossible had not his sympathetic wife Else assumed the obligation of keeping five lively young ones quietly entertained, and helping in countless other ways, while her author husband was at work.

In 1918 he wrote his drama, "A Voice in the Dark," which he sold by mail to a prominent Broadway producer within a month after its completion, and which had a long run at the Republic Theater in New York. The play received highly favorable reviews in newspapers, magazines and the theatrical trade press, being described by various New York critics as "a real novelty, clever, ingenious, highly original" and "the most absorbing entertainment of this season." In January 1920, it began another long run at the Woods Theater in Chicago. In April and May 1921, Samuel Goldwyn exhibited his silent motion picture version of this drama at trade shows in London, England, and Cardiff, Wales. In June 1921 it premiered at the Capitol Theater, New York City. The stage version of this play was given more than 800 performances by stock companies throughout the United States and Canada.

Life in the country afforded Ralph Dyar much pleasure -- but it was complicated by the manifold tasks connected with a farm, by increasingly poor transportation to Spokane, and by educating five children, who were taught at home for several years before traveling by train to a district school. The family moved to Spokane in 1927. They bought the big, square, two-story green house, shaded by Yellow Pine trees, at 526 East 12th Avenue. Thereafter Ralph walked two miles to downtown Spokane each morning that he went to the newspaper office, always refusing rides because he enjoyed the walk. There may have been some aspects of country living which he missed -- but he always claimed he did not miss rising early to milk the cow!

He continued to write at home. Various other plays made their bow before the public. In the silent motion picture days, the then prominent companies of Essanay and Nestor accepted and produced dramas of his authorship. His mystery play, "The Real Thing," was presented in November 1928, at the New Rochelle Theater, New Rochelle, New York, and at the Bronx Opera House in the Bronx, New York. In the same year, his 3-act comedy, "Horseshoe Luck," won a \$500 prize in a national playwriting contest, and was published by the Penn Publishing company, Philadelphia, later appearing in the volume, "Prize Plays of 1928." Two characters in "Horseshoe Luck" were his old friends Lib and May Ingham of Dover.

In 1930 his one-act play, "Three Soldiers of the Land," winner in a contest in which Ethel Barrymore was a judge, was published by the Home and Community Department of the American Farm Bureau Federation, Chicago, and was widely acted in rural communities. The Woodside Community club of Sagamon County, Illinois, staged this play and presented it in Springfield before an audience of 10,000. That same year, the Penn Publishing Company issued Mr. Dyar's play, "Toby is Hired." In 1932, Walter Baker & Company, Boston, published "An R.F.D. Heiress." In September 1936, the Federal Theatre Project of Tacoma, Washington, introduced "Girl Wants Glamour."

Drawing on his theatrical experience to contribute to his promotional work with the newspapers, Mr. Dyar wrote the scenarios and commentary for three sound-color films,

sponsored by the Spokane newspapers. The first of these documentary films, "Spokane and Its Inland Empire," was presented in January 1941 at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City, and then toured the United States, South America, Australia, Queensland and Canada. "Readership Study of the Washington Farmer" in 1947 and "Flying Farmers of the Pacific Northwest" in 1948, followed the first in traveling careers.

The first book ever issued in hard cover on the subject of how newspapers publicize themselves, was written by Ralph E. Dyar and published in 1942 by Harper and Brothers, New York, under the title, "Newspaper Promotion and Research." Distributed in Canada and the United States, it was described by the Montreal Daily Star as "without a doubt the most penetrating X-ray that had ever been made of what is behind a newspaper as far as reader interest is concerned." Many schools and departments of journalism adopted it as a text.

Five years after the appearance of this book, W. H. Cowles, publisher of the Spokesman-Review, gave Ralph Dyar the assignment to write the history of that newspaper and of the varied field it serves. Preliminary work was started at once, and in January 1948 Mr. Dyar retired from his other newspaper duties to devote full time to the historical project. The resulting book, "News for an Empire," containing 500 pages and more than 200 illustrations, many in color, was printed and bound by The Country Life Press, New York, and published January 4, 1952, under the imprint of the Caxton Printers, Ltd.

Caldwell, Idaho. Its formal publication date was Ralph E. Dyar's 68th birthday.

Sparked by these activities, numerous invitations were extended to Ralph Dyar for speaking engagements and platform appearances. He was heard on the radio with Burns Mantle of the "Best Plays" series; was interviewed on Station KYA, San Francisco, and KXLT, Spokane; was a featured speaker on the "Books and Authors" program, San Francisco; delivered a series of addresses as "professional lecturer" at the State University of Montana School of Journalism; and addressed numerous other journalism, civic and club groups.

His special interests also were reflected in his affiliations with various organizations. After "A Voice In The Dark" had run for several months on Broadway, he was invited to join the Society of American Dramatists and Composers, the invitation being extended over the signatures of George M. Cohan, Victor Herbert, John L. Golden and Arthur Hopkins. He was a member of the Dramatists Guild of the Authors League of America, and an honorary member of the International Mark Twain Society, having been tapped for that honor by Cyril Clemens, cousin of the noted humorist. He was also a member of the General society of Mayflower Descendants, and a member of the board of the Society of Mayflower Descendants in the State of Washington. Other affiliations included membership in the Spokane University Club and the Spokane Knife and Fork Club.

Ralph Dyar was a small man whose slight build belied the drive and energy that combined with his talents to

bring him to the fore in so many lines. He was a modest man, often preoccupied in manner; but the twinkle in the brown eyes gave away his sparkling wit, and his sense of humor was echoed by the boyish laugh in appreciation of a good joke. His head of plentiful black hair turned white in later years.

After "News For An Empire" was published, Mr. Dyar retired from the Spokane newspapers. He thoroughly enjoyed the extra time for his many interests, which included chess, workworking, and driving on country roads -- perhaps looking for the first buttercup as he had once looked for the first pasque flower. He read voluminously, and especially liked to stretch his legs before a crackling fireplace fire of apple logs. Near his residence he converted two vacant lots from a mass of pine snags and lava rock to a fertile garden of corn, vegetables, berries and fruit trees bordered with flowers, both wild and tame.

Fishing was among his most absorbing recreations from boyhood. During his years in Spokane, he had obtained a Crown Grant to forty acres of woodland, bisected by a trout stream, in the southern Selkirk Mountains of Canada. With his enthusiasm for handcrafts, he had converted an old log cabin into a comfortable recreational headquarters for himself and his family. His wife and children all shared his enjoyment of wildlife and the outdoors. Mr. Dyar at the age of 71 still backpacked to his cabin in the woods, and clad in his old tan fishing outfit confounded his daughters and grandchildren with his uncanny skill at pulling brook trout from the stream --

and frying them to a tempting golden brown over the camp stove later.

Ralph Emerson Dyar died on December 20, 1955, shortly before his 72nd birthday. He died unexpectedly of a heart attack, and he lived actively up till the last -- interested in his home, family, community, nature, and his varied professions. Inspired by a near-dozen assorted grandchildren, he had started after the age of 70 to write and illustrate books for children.

His wife Else, active in civic circles and much loved by her wide circle of friends, still occupies their long-time home in Spokane. Their five children were all born in Kiesling, graduated from the Lewis and Clark High School in Spokane, and all received college degrees from the University of Washington in Seattle. They are:

(1) Conrad Emerson Dyar, born June 30, 1910. He is a chemist with Bayonier, Inc., living in Port Angeles, Washington. Among his hobbies are photography, fishing, chess and gardening. He has three daughters, Nancy, Anne and Mary.

(2) Ruth Eleanor, born August 16, 1912, now Mrs. John D. Mendenhall, living in Pasadena, California. Her hobbies include mountain climbing, back packing, fishing, and skiing, and she has written articles on these topics for many publications. She has two daughters, Vivian and Valerie.

(3) Joan Wilhelmina, born May 13, 1915, now Mrs. Nathan Clark, Living in Los Angeles, California. She is a

musician, and enjoys camping and gardening. She has one daughter, Sylvia.

(4) Alice Mary, born January 29, 1917, now Mrs. Philip N. Bier, living in Seattle, Washington. She is active in youth groups, camping, fishing, skiing, art, crafts, and puppetry. She has four children, Allan, Douglas, Steven, and Gail.

(5) Margaret Thekla, born January 7, 1920, now Mrs. Paul Ashworth, living in Bremerton, Washington, where she teaches chemistry at the Olympic Community College. Margaret, in addition to receiving her Bachelor's and Master's degrees at the University of Washington, where she was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, was awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Bacteriology at Cornell University, New York. Her hobbies include gardening, fishing, camping and painting. She has one son, John Paul.

The cultural, intellectual and outdoor life of Winona over half a century ago left its mark on Ralph Dyar -- and these influences were passed on to all his children and grandchildren in the Far West today.

Addendum:

Alice Dyar Russell, sister of Ralph Dyar, received a B. A. Degree from the University of Minnesota in 1903, and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. She took an M. A. degree from George Washington University in 1907. In addition to writing fiction for magazines here and in England, she was the author of a juvenile novel, "Strangers in the Desert," published by Harper's in 1938 and later in pocket edition. A number of her short stories were included, after their original publication, in anthologies, and one in a book on creative writing.









Following is an extract from *Washington Northwest Frontiers, Volume III*, New York, New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, Inc., 1957, pp. 48-52.

A few new pieces of our ancestry are revealed thanks to Mary Davis Dyar. Apparently, she did some exploring into the family tree, and she gave us a firm connection to an ancestor who served in the Revolutionary War.

1. Israel Lombard
2. Thomas Lombard
3. Anna Gross Lombard (Davis)
4. Mary Davis Dyar - J. H. Davis, Jr.
(siblings)

5. Annie	Kenneth Davis
Alice	6. Eleanor
Louis	Ruth
Ralph	Helen
Gladys	Susan
	Jane

Ralph Dyar's ancestors, as far back as Mayflower days, laid down roots for the family and contributed to the building of the nation.

Born in Dover, Minnesota, on January 4, 1884, he is the son of Emerson D. and Mary Eleanor (Davis) Dyar. His father was born in West Freeman, Maine, on February 16, 1844. Beginning professional life as a schoolmaster in his native state, he moved to Minnesota in 1866, where he continued to teach school for a number of years. Among Emerson D. Dyar's contributions was the start in life he gave through tutoring and counseling a farm

boy who rose to world-wide fame as Secretary of State, Ambassador to Great Britain and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize -- Frank B. Kellogg.

His mother was born on March 18, 1845, at Truro, Massachusetts. Mary Davis's grandfather, Ebenezer Lombard Davis, was a mariner for forty years and a ship-master for about twenty-five years, the vessels he commanded including a cartel ship, used for the exchange of prisoners in the war of 1812, and sailing vessels engaged in European, South American and West Indies trade. Retiring from the sea, Ebenezer Davis represented the town of Truro in the Massachusetts State legislature in 1833-34 and in 1834-35. Mary Davis was the daughter of Joshua Hinckley Davis, superintendent of schools in Somerville, across the Charles River from Boston, for twenty-two years.

Both Mary Davis and her husband were descended from Revolutionary War patriots. She was the great-granddaughter of Israel Lombard who assisted in establishing American independence while acting in the capacity of private in Joseph Smith's company, August 31, 1776 to November 22, 1776.

On Tuesday, July 15, 1924, at their annual Field Day, the Maine State Daughters of the American Revolution paid homage to Emerson D. Dyar's great-grandparents, Joseph and Elizabeth Nichols Dyar. On the afternoon of that day officials and members of the D.A.R. gathered at the ancestral Dyar farm in Freeman, Maine, to dedicate a bronze tablet affixed to a granite boulder, with an inscription.

"All Flesh is Grass"

TO COMMEMORATE THE PATRIOTISM OF
ELIZABETH NICHOLS DYAR
ONE OF THE THREE YOUNG WOMEN
WHO MIXED AND APPLIED THE PAINT
TO DISGUISE AS INDIANS
THE MEN OF THE BOSTON TEA PARTY
DECEMBER 16, 1773
WITH HER CHILDREN SHE WAS SMUGGLED
THROUGH THE LINES TO MALDEN
PASSED LATTER PART OF LIFE HERE
WITH YOUNGEST SON JOHN NICHOLS DYAR
ON "PROSPECT" FARM
AND WAS BURIED ON THIS SPOT

ALSO HER HUSBAND
JOSEPH DYAR
WHO WAS NINE TIMES CAPTURED BY THE BRITISH
WHILE CAPTAIN OF BOAT
CARRYING SUPPLIES TO AMERICAN ARMY
DIED FROM EFFECT OF ILL TREATMENT IN 1783
AND BURIED IN MALDEN, MASS.

THIS GRAVE RESTORED BY THEIR DESCENDANTS
TOWN OF FREEMAN
AND COLONEL ASA WHITCOMB CHAPTER
OF KINGSFIELD, SEPTEMBER, 1923
TABLET PLACED BY THE MAINE STATE COUNCIL
DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
JULY 1924

A LETTER FROM JOSHUA H. DAVIS
TO HIS BETROTHED
ANNA GROSS LOMBARD
1838

LETTERS FROM
SOLOMON DAVIS
&
JOSHUA H. DAVIS, JR.
TO THEIR MOTHER
1860

Andover, Sept. 2, 1838

My dear Anna,

Again have circumstances removed me far from those I love, and again must we resort to writing as the only means of intercourse. But as this is the only means; I cheerfully resort to it.

We had a very pleasant time to Boston, and I arrived there in time to take dinner on Tuesday.

I believe that you was the last individual I saw in Truro; for just as we started from the wharf you was going under the shore bound home from school, and just as we were going out of sight, I saw you peep over the hill. What a boy to be watching the girls so sharp. But that was the last peep I expect to take again very soon. So was I not excusable?

I have taken up my hermitage and am courting solitude, have no one to say why do ye so, or who are you writing letters to, I think I shall like rooming alone very well. And I know that I shall have a better chance to study.

I expect that I enjoy myself as well as I should anywhere away from home, and those whom time and circumstances have rendered as dear as life itself or which render life worth living for.

But my solitude is cheered by the pleasing consideration that I am not to

live so always, and with the hope that there are many years yet to come in which we shall live not only in the possession of each others warmest love and affection, (for I trust that is already the case) but also in the constant enjoyment of each others society, and when we shall together share life's joys and sorrows, and think you not, that, that alone will tend to augment its joys, and alleviate its sorrows.

Truly there are charms in friendship which the lonely child of solitude is stranger to; and the society of friends or those we love furnishes an asylum to which we may resort and forget the cares of life which crowd upon the mind in hours of solitude.

I hope you will not infer that I am troubled with lows here in my solitude; for I am glad to find that I am outgrowing such things as I grow old.

It is also gratifying to me to find that you are not destitute of that characteristic so common with your sex (viz. the art of comforting). I do not know where I should be had it not been for a Mother and sisters to steer me through the dark spots which lowered me from the age of 18 to 21. But those things have passed by.

And the hoary locks and furrowed brow of that beloved mother enforces upon me the painful consideration that I cannot long enjoy her cheering and restraining admonitions. And fortunate will it be for me, can her place be supplied by you.

The great object of our lives must be, to render the life of each other happy which we shall find abundant opportunity in a variety of ways. But let us remember that virtue is the only road to true happiness.

And pardon me, dear Anna, if I again revert to the subject which occupied the few moments we last met.

It will be a matter of but little consequence to us what are our external circumstances; if we enjoy that peace of mind possessed only by the Christian. We shall be happy, and is it not of the utmost importance? and when shall we have a more favorable time than the present.

Should we commence now in youth, we shall have something to support us in all the scenes of life and when called to bid adieu to earth, we shall have something to enable us to meet death with composure, and will furnish us with the assurance of meeting again (to part no more), in that bright world.

Will you not, dear Anna, take this subject into serious consideration, and see if it is not worthy of our immediate attention. And are you not willing to me, that you will commence with me immediately and in good earnest about these things?

Can we not thus assist each other, and if we are united, what do we care what others may do or say, so long as we can have the consciousness of doing right.

I wish you to think of this matter with candor and give me your decision, when you write me.

Pardon me for dwelling thus long on this subject, for I do feel it to be of the utmost importance, and shall be

happy to hear that you also feel an interest in it.

I am enjoying very good health. You may expect another in three weeks from the time you receive this.

Please improve the first opportunity to write for time passes heavily, state how your health is.

I remain your affectionate
J. H. Davis

Joshua glimpses Anna "bound home from school" as his ship is leaving Truro for Boston. Anna is 19 and most likely not a student of any Truro school. Could she have been a teacher? If so, it is not mentioned anywhere in the family history.

Joshua mentions "lows" and "dark spots" afflicting him from ages 18-21. Could this be depression? This is the classic textbook age for the onset of depression in males.

He records another "period of shadows and light" and "turmoil in his mind" about 25 years later. He was forced to close his school, Truro Academy, in 1854 due to his "failing health" which may have caused by worry over failed business ventures, Truro no longer being a viable economic community, and the responsibility of 7 children.

The gist of this letter seems revolve around a religious problem. Joshua wants the two of them to be in accord over some issue which they have seriously discussed.



Joshua Hinckley Davis, Sr.



Anna Gross Lombard Davis

The boys' mother (Anna Davis), sister Sarah (age 6) and brother Thomas (3) are away from home visiting her parents (Grandmother and Grandfather Peterson) in Truro. "The girls" mentioned in Solomon's letters are sisters Anna (Ann) age 17, Mary, 15 and Emily, 9. In 1860, Solomon is 13 and Joshua 11. A copy of the original letter is included to show the penmanship of the two boys. Apparently, their father got quite a kick out of Joshua Jr.'s letter, hence his short note at the end.

Somerville, June 22, 1860

Dear Mother,

We received your letter night before last and were glad to hear that you were so well. We went into our church last Sabbath and the galleries instead of hurting the looks of it makes it look better and instead of making it darker makes it lighter.

We had our Sabbath School concert in the evening when we had an address by Mr. Tillinghast a Quaker & he gave each of us a little book.

Father thought of taking the Hospital pew but the girls didn't like the idea so Father is going to get ours upholstered.

Day before Yesterday I went up to the High school to carry Anna her Umbrella and rubbers and as I was coming home it began to rain and I was wet through.

How is Thomas and Sarah? tell Thomas the kitten is well and growing fast and I think she will be sorry when you get back and tell him another chicken is dead and that the old hen has weaned them.

Give my love to all the folks both young and old.

How is Grandfather and Grandmother and all the folks? (and as good luck will have it) we are faring sumptuously every day.

Your Affectionate Son

Solomon Davis

Somerville June 22, 1860

Dear Mother,

Solomon left some room so I thought I would write a few lines to let you know how we are getting along in the cooking department. We have pretty good things now you are gone, and once in a while something extra.

Yesterday Ann boiled some potatoes and corned beef in which she put some dumplings which came out as heavy as a brick and as black as a coal. then she took some of the water which she boiled the meat in And then she took some butter and thickning and stirred it with some of the water. And made some gravy.

Last night we had a box of strawberries the first that we have had this year. Mrs. Conant sent us in two quarts of milk last night. Mrs. Cran was at our house to night. I don't know who will come next.

Your affectionate son

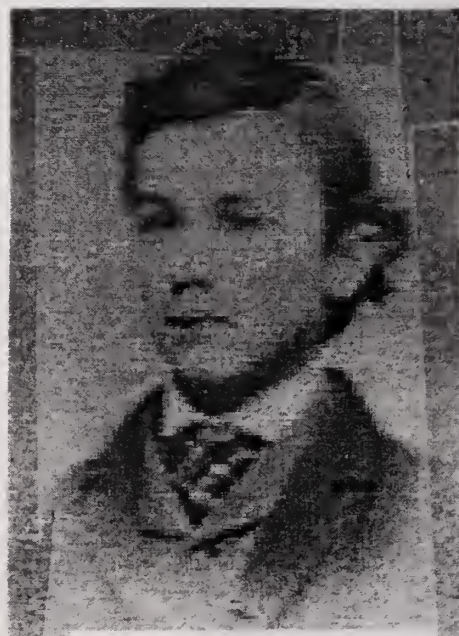
J. H. Davis

(Note added from the boys' father, Joshua H. Davis, Sr., to his wife)

You will see from Joshua's letter that we occasionally have a fancy dish, not described in the "Cook Book." But then "Variety is the spice of life."



Joshua H. Davis, Jr.



Solomon Davis

Somerville, June, 22, 1840

Dear Mother,

We received your letter
night before last and were glad to hear
that you were so well. We went into
our church last Sabbath and the gallery
is instead of hauling the looks of it makes
it look better and instead of making
it darker makes it lighter.

We had our Sabbath School twice
in the evening when we had an
address by Mr. Fillingham a Quaker.
He gave each of us a little book.

Father thought of taking the
Hospital fever but the girls didn't
like the idea so Father is going
to have me visited.

Yesterday I went up to the High
School to carry Anna her Umbrella
and rubbers and as I was coming

home it began to rain and I was
not through.

Now is Thomas and Lundy
tell Thomas the kitten is well and
growing fast and I think she will
be sorry when you get back and
tell her another chicken is dead
and that the old hen has warmed
them.

Give my love to all the
folks both young and old.

Now is Grandfather and Grand
mother and all the folks? (And
as good luck will have it) we are
very sumptuously every day.

Ever Affectionate Son

Edward Davis.

Concord, June 29 1861

Dear Mother

Solomon - left some
room so I thought I would write a few
lines to let you - know how we are getting
along in the cooking department. I have
pretty good things now you are gone, and once
in a while something extra. Yesterday Ann
boiled some potatoes and ^{coined} in which
she put some dumplings which came out as
heavy as a brick and as black as a coal. I know
took some of the water which she boiled the meat
in. And then she took some butter and
thickening and stirred it with some of the water.
And made some gravy. Last night we had a
box of strawberries the first that we have had
this year. Mrs. Brown sent us in two quarts of
milk last night. Mrs. Brown was about
home to night. I don't know who will
come next.

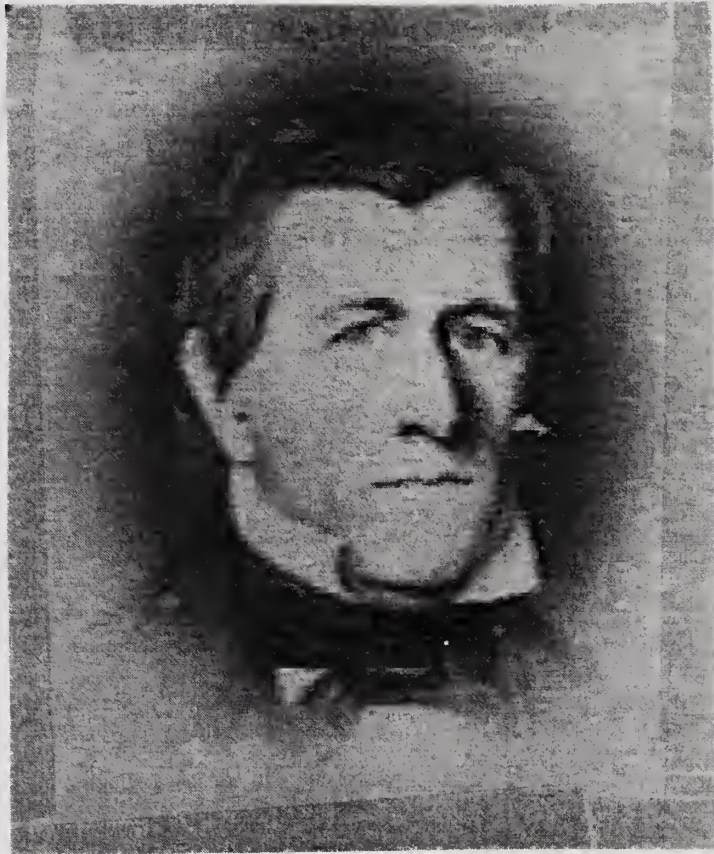
Your affectionate son
J. W. Davis

Now with me from Frederick's
letter that we occasionally have
a "living" sheet, not "classified"
in the "Book Book." But then
"living" is the name of the game.

ON THE EVE OF
THE CIVIL WAR

BENJAMIN HINCKLEY
WROTE TWO LETTERS
TO HIS COUSIN
JOSHUA H. DAVIS, SR.

A MONTH AFTER THE
WAR BROKE OUT,
JOSHUA DAVIS
RESPONDED.



BENJAMIN HINCKLEY

To date I have not explored the Hinckley line at length, so the exact relationship of Benjamin Hinckley to Joshua Hinckley Davis, Sr. is not known. They are probably first or second cousins.

This Benjamin Hinckley is probably the same man Mary Davis Dyar encountered in Truro in 1866.

Letter #1

Mr. Hopkins and his wife are Simon Hopkins and Caroline Matilda Davis Hopkins. Caroline was the second daughter of J. H. Davis's older brother Ebenezer. Benjamin Hinckley had the same relationship to Ebenezer and his family as he did to J. H. Davis and his family, so it seems surprising he had never met them before.

Caroline Matilda Davis Hopkins died in New Orleans in October of 1861. She left a daughter Olympe Matilda who died young and was buried in the Ebenezer Davis family plot at Woodlawn Cemetery in Everett, MA. A son Charles Lester was also born to this family.

Letter #2

Benjamin's spelling and grammar plummet as his pro-Confederacy passions escalate.

Letter #3

This should be required reading in all American schools, published in a book of correspondence masterpieces, and revered by the American Legion.

New Orleans
Dec. 16, 1860

Dear Cousin,

With most folks, I should first await an answer to learn if a correspondence was agreeable to them or not; but with my old and well tried friend, I should as soon think of waiting a letter from one of my sisters, on point of etiquette, as waiting for you, for I have no doubt as soon as you have time you will write.

And as I am so vain (and you know I have any amount of that,) as to think that you feel interested in my welfare, I hasten to inform you I have got into employment with my friends Messrs.. Sampson & Keen. But it was only through true friendship they employed me for they are doing just as little business as they can possibly help, turning away great many times customers they would be glad to sell too in ordinary times.

They discharged quite a number of men last night, not having anything for them to do. All business men here say that such times for business was never before known in the hardest of times before. Men by thousands are out of employment. And I am fearful that they will be driven to desperation. Murders and robberies will become more frequent.

And in my opinion that unless the political difficulties become settled very soon (which there is no hope of,) that this unemployed labour will concentrate under a leader which will trample under foot all laws for the protection of property and go for a general distribution by Mob Law.

When I wrote you before, I had not seen Mr. Hopkins. I had called several times at his office but had not found him. I saw him however the next day after writing. I find him to be very much the gentleman as much so as any man I have met with. He invited (me) to go and dine with him on the 29th ult. I accepted of his invitation and I must say that I enjoyed myself as well as ever I did on any visit I ever made to any friend his wife appeared very glad to see me and we had a social time. They live about three miles out of the City, have a fine house a beautiful garden and everything that goes to make life comfortable.

Your name was mentioned as only names are named among mutual friends. when I find one, who fully appreciated my friends I can enter fully with them with good zest to speak of them. I found in Mr. Hopkins one who fully appreciated one of my most cherished friends. I find Mr. Hopkins to be highly respected by the best classes of society, and is consulted not a little on business affairs.

As no northern papers get through the post office, it is useless for you to forward any to me as I told you in my last would be very acceptable. Not being able to get hold of any northern papers I can learn nothing of what is going on North except what the papers here see fit to quote and that is very meager I assure you. So that if you will write me as often as you can you will confer a great favor.

I don't know but you might almost feel disgusted with me for going so much into the excitement of the times in my last. As I do think the people of Massachusetts cannot fully or will not

appreciate the real difficulties that are hovering over our country.

From the time that I came down from the Mountains of Kentucky to the time of my writing to you having nothing to do but talk and listen to the talk of others, and not an hour in the day or night except when asleep but that I was meeting with a new set of men. And of all classes. And in my own vanity thinking I had traveled enough to learn from those I was meeting how to judge of the public sentiment.

And I found the disunion sentiment to be so general that I felt it to be my duty to do all I could to inform the North of what their course was tending. So I was writing under the necessity of being more careful of how I wrote; but to you I let drive my pen not even reading over after writing to know what I had written hoping there might be in the mass something or some hints that might do good if under your revision should be prepared for the press.

Matters do not stand any better south than they did when I wrote you before. If the real truth could be got at. That aside from South Carolina there is not a State that really wants to go out of the Union. But as so much had been said against living under a Republican president. They universally set up the cry of cession so as to force the North if possible to concession to repeal of personal liberty bills.

And from what I can gather by the Southern press the Northern papers suspected that to be the policy of the South and have injudiciously taunted them with it. Which has now aroused their passions and pride, and unless those Northern States that have laws upon their Statute Books against the

rendition of fugitive Slaves shall repeal them the Union will be dissolved.

I find now there is not so much excitement but a more determined will and many who when I first came here laughed at cession now say it will come unless something is speedily done to arrest it.

The excitement here was so great for three weeks that a conservative sentiment could not be heard. But among all the turmoil there is a large conservative element held in reserve waiting for this wild excitement to spend its force.

And when it has spent its strength, if there seems to be a strong party North who shall strive to have obnoxious laws repealed they will go to work throughout the South to try to save the Union.

Knowing this was my reason for recommending the conservatives of Massachusetts of calling meetings and by that means showing their appreciation of the Union; in doing that it would be followed South by the conservative and by the united exertions of such the Union may be saved.

Time moves on; and unless something of the kind is done, Our Country is gone. Oh! the horrors of Civil War who can contemplate them without shuddering. War must follow disunion. it may not come at once but come it must.

My love to your family reserving at all times good share to yourself.

Your affectionate Cousin
Benj. Hinckley

New Orleans
Feb. 10, 1861

Dear Cousin,

Your very kind letter of the 29th ult. came to hand this day. It affords me much pleasure to correspond with you for more reasons than one.

We are selfish creatures all seeking individual happiness. Away from all my friends, few asside from my own family with whom I feel in sympathy, and asside from them you are the only one with whom I care to correspond hoping an answer. Your letters seem almost to annihilate space and bring us face to face. But the want of the voice and confiding countenance makes me feel the reality of my exile.

If you do not write to me I should feel as if I had lost your respect. Love must go out when respect is lost. One man talking of loving another man some times I feel as if the word was misapplied. I can truly say I love. So my dear I shall be more exacting of you than you were of me do write if it does draw on your time. Talk of time, I would sit up nights and write to secure your letters, which are to me "as water to a thirsty soul."

I was glad to learn that you immediate friends still failed to look upon the troubles which are now upon our country in the light which to my mind and which you sympathise in the right light. Faults there are on both sides. But if ever you would look into the matter with unprejudiced minds, Remembering that at the time of the

adoption of the constitution Slavery did then exist, and we should never been the United States if it had not been for the Patriotism and conciliatory spirit of our Pure minded ancestors, As the government was made upon holy principles.

We have no business to interfere with the institution, morally or legally. And are in no way responsible under our form of Government each State having full authority to regulate its own internal affairs. And to my mind it is wicked to harrass and make unhappy those we cannot help. If I should see a man drowning, if he was beyond my reach, and I could see no earthly help for him I should think I was taunting him to shout to him he was drowning.

The evils of Slavery the owners see and feel really more than the North. But it is upon the country and must be tolerated not only tolerated but cherished and turned to as much advantage to both classes as possible.

It may be interesting to you to know how we get along out of the Union. So far as business is concerned it has rather revived since the State left the Union. But all is uncertainty and fear, none feel secure. Have you never when a boy when along in the dark whistled to keep up your courage?

There is no small amount of whistling being done at the South. There are thousands who if they could be left to their own judgment would gladly if they could revoke their votes which were given for secession.

To get the honest expressions which (there is not a day) we have as our customers are from every section of the South they say, Our politicians had been telling them Northern Black Republicans that the South would seced from the Union if they elected their candidate and they laughed at us, and said it was all talk. I voted for secession to just let them know we dare to do it. And every expression which seems to indicate a favorable sentiment in favor of compromise is caught up with the greatest avidity, showing conclusively to my mind they hope to get amicably back into the Union. But I fear the Union is lost forever. Surely if blood is spilled there will be one United States.

There are many things which come under my observation which would be interesting, hearing so much and writing so much of what I hear I have no doubt I make repetitions not keeping copy of my letters. But as I find this feeling very general, I may have written it before it will bear to be repeated. the North have nothing to hope from the Conservative portion of this community now.

They say we done all in our power to stay the tide of secession. As the majoraty has desided against us we now go with them and our influence money shall go to sustain a Southern republic. As one Mississippian said in our store I done all I could against secession but my State has seceded. I go with my State right or wrong. She is poor and to sustain her honor if this take one fourth of my property if shall go willingly he is a rich man. That is the feeling generally.

It may be a subject of inquiry what has become of Benjamin and Slidel and representatives from this State who have been so loud for secession? Why are not in the Counsel of the State?

That small manoraty of conservative men in the Convention of the State are virtually ruling it in a quiet way. The warmest and foremost men for secession are being rebuked; awfully rebuked by being dropped from the counsel. Slidel and Benjamin expected to be sent to the convention of the Southern Confederacy. Neither you are aware was thus honored. Which to my mind is a shure sign that Louisiana would gladly go back into the Union if the Compromise offered by Crittenden should become organic law of the Land.

Situated as we are the least unfriendly act would widen the breach so as never to be healed. But there is one almost indissoluble bond of Union. Commerce the great civiliser of nations will do its work of Union sooner or later. There may be two republics but the interests of the two sections will bring them together for trade.

I am so much engaged during business hours that I have no opportunity to see him of late. I have a standing invitation to go to his house at any time and I think before long I shall take a walk out for exercise. Could go by railroad.

I hope you will write often. I must close now by sending to you and your family my warmest loves.

Your affectionate cousin
Benjamin Hinckley

Boston
May 15, 1861

Dear Cousin Benj. Hinckley,

I received your kind letter by Mr. Keen, and now take advantage of the same conveyance to send one to you.

We are all very well and should be most happy to have you with us.

With reference to the subject matter of your letter the all absorbing subject now agitating the Country, I will state. You have probably inferred from my letters, that I supported Bell & Everett and felt greatly grieved that they could not be elected. My sympathies were with the South so far as to grant them every right and privilege guaranteed to them by the constitution while they remained in the Union and place themselves upon their constitutional rights. And even after the Seven States had seceded I thought it would be as well to let them go peaceably and try the experiment, feeling assured that all in good time they would return to their allegiance.

But on the 13th day of April 1861 a wonderful change came over the spirit of my dream.

The Flag of our nation, which from my earliest recollection I have looked upon with exultant pride, which for three-fourths of a century has been respected by all civilized nations, and afforded protection to all sailing under it, has been dishonored, and by those too, who should have shed their best blood to defend it.

They have passed the Rubicon--they have thrown open the temple of Janus and initiated a war that will never terminate until our glorious Banner waves again over every stronghold from which it has been removed. From your standpoint that assertion may sound arrogant. But it would not appear so could you witness what I do. Such an uprising of the people, such an entire unanimity of feeling, such unconquerable determination. The genius of freedom is fully aroused and all without distinction of party are ready with life and treasure, to maintain the honor of the Government at all hazard and any cost.

We do not underrate the strength and courage of the people of the South. We expect it will be "Greek meet Greek", but there can be no question in any reflecting mind respecting the final result.

The twenty million of freemen engaged in a just cause and with the resources of the free States and the entire unanimity of feeling prevalent among them, are more than a match for any power that can be brought against them.

It is a presumption to suppose that they will allow this glorious government to be broken up.

It would be the greatest calamity that could possibly occur, even to the people of the seceded States.

No, it cannot be permitted. Our country has not yet performed its high destiny.



I have the fullest confidence that it will come forth from this ordeal, purified like gold from the crucible.

I heard a very intelligent gentleman, who has travelled much in Europe and had a fine opportunity to see the finest troops they have in England and on the continent, say, that he had no hesitation in affirming that the troops which have gone from Massachusetts are the finest set of men ever marshalled. They can take care of themselves anywhere.

They are equal to any emergency. If a steam engine needs repairing or a ship is to be manned or a bridge constructed or an oven built or bread baked or anything else to be done that men can do, they are prepared for it.

Please excuse my great haste and write me as often as you can.

Yours aff.

J. H. Davis

Benjamin, Judah Philip (1811-1884) Confederate statesman

Born in St. Thomas, British West Indies, the son of Jewish parents, he moved with his family to Charleston, where he attended a local academy before going north to Yale at the age of 14. He left after two years without taking a degree. Returning to the South in 1828, he accepted a job with a merchant in New Orleans. He meanwhile studied law, opened a practice and began to rise rapidly in the profession.

Benjamin's participation in the case of the brig *Creole* solidified his growing reputation. His brief, which reviewed the status of slavery under U.S. and international

The first Confederate cabinet, 1861: Judah Benjamin (4 o'clock position) was the Confederate attorney general.

law, was reprinted and widely read. For a time he ran a sugar plantation but encountered financial difficulties and soon returned to law and its near relation, politics. He served in the Louisiana legislature and in 1852 won election to the U.S. Senate as a Whig. The political crisis over slavery turned him gradually toward the Democratic party, which he formally joined in 1856.

Upon Abraham Lincoln's election to the presidency in 1860 Benjamin became one of the strongest supporters of secession. He resigned from the Senate in early February 1861 after Louisiana left the Union, and within a few weeks he accepted Jefferson Davis's offer of the Confederate States' attorney generalship. He got on well with Davis from the start, and in September 1861 Davis appointed him secretary of war, succeeding the ineffectual Leroy P. Walker

Within a few months, Benjamin had become one of the most unpopular men in the South, blamed for the Confederacy's first defeats, at Roanoke Island, North Carolina, and forts Henry and Donelson in the Kentucky-Tennessee theater.

A congressional investigating committee, in search of a scapegoat, found Benjamin responsible for the loss of Roanoke Island. Davis stood by him staunchly, easing the pressure on him slightly in early March 1862 by naming him secretary of state. Benjamin seemed to lack political instincts, and some of his political problems were of his own making. In one famous clumsy instance he quipped that Confederate soldiers were barefoot not because the army failed to supply them with shoes but because they traded their footwear for whiskey.

Benjamin did not appear to mind being the object of almost universal dislike. He was, and remained, one of the most clear-sighted of Confederate leaders. He became one of the first to discard the hallowed Southern political principle of states' rights, recognizing that it served as a brake on the central authority's ability to wage war. States' rights policies on conscription and taxation, he argued, would lead to the Confederacy's ruin. He had no particular interest in preserving the institution of slavery: in 1864 he campaigned in favor of educating slaves, drafting them into the Confederate military forces and sending them into combat. In return, slave veterans would be granted their freedom.

The proposal outraged most Southerners. "If we didn't go to war to save our slaves what did we go to war for?" Senator Robert Hunter asked. In January 1865 Benjamin sent a diplomatic emissary to England to offer general emancipation in return for British intervention and the raising of the Federal blockade. But the offer came too late, and the Confederacy's last diplomatic gambit ended in failure. As for Benjamin, he narrowly survived censure by congress, the Confederate senate dividing evenly in February on the resolution that he had not been "a wise and prudent Secretary of State."

It hardly mattered by then. Benjamin lasted in office as long as Robert E. Lee did, fleeing south with Davis in April 1865. He took leave of the presidential party in Charlotte, North Carolina, and made good his escape to England.



Slidell, John

(1793-1871) Confederate diplomat

A New York native and Columbia University graduate, he failed in business in New York and established a New Orleans law practice. As a Democratic Congressman (1843-1845) and Senator (1853-1861), he became an influential political power-broker. In 1861, in the so-called *Trent* affair, he was captured at sea by Union naval forces while he and James Mason were on a mission to seek Anglo-French recognition for the Confederacy, a goal he never achieved, despite his skilful diplomatic performance. He did, however, arrange for the French construction of ships and financing for the Confederacy. Union general Randal Slidell MacKenzie (1840-1889) was his nephew.

Everett, Edward

(1794-1865)

Clergyman, statesman, orator

A classics professor at Harvard and eventually the university's president, Everett also held many high government offices, including U.S. Congressman (1824-1834), governor of Massachusetts (1835-1839), minister to Great Britain (1841-1845) and U.S. Senator (1853-1854). He was noted for brilliant oratory. His many wartime speeches rallied Northern support for the government and were judged by some to be his primary achievement; perhaps the most famous was his two-hour speech preceding Lincoln's brief Gettysburg Address.

Crittenden, John Jordon

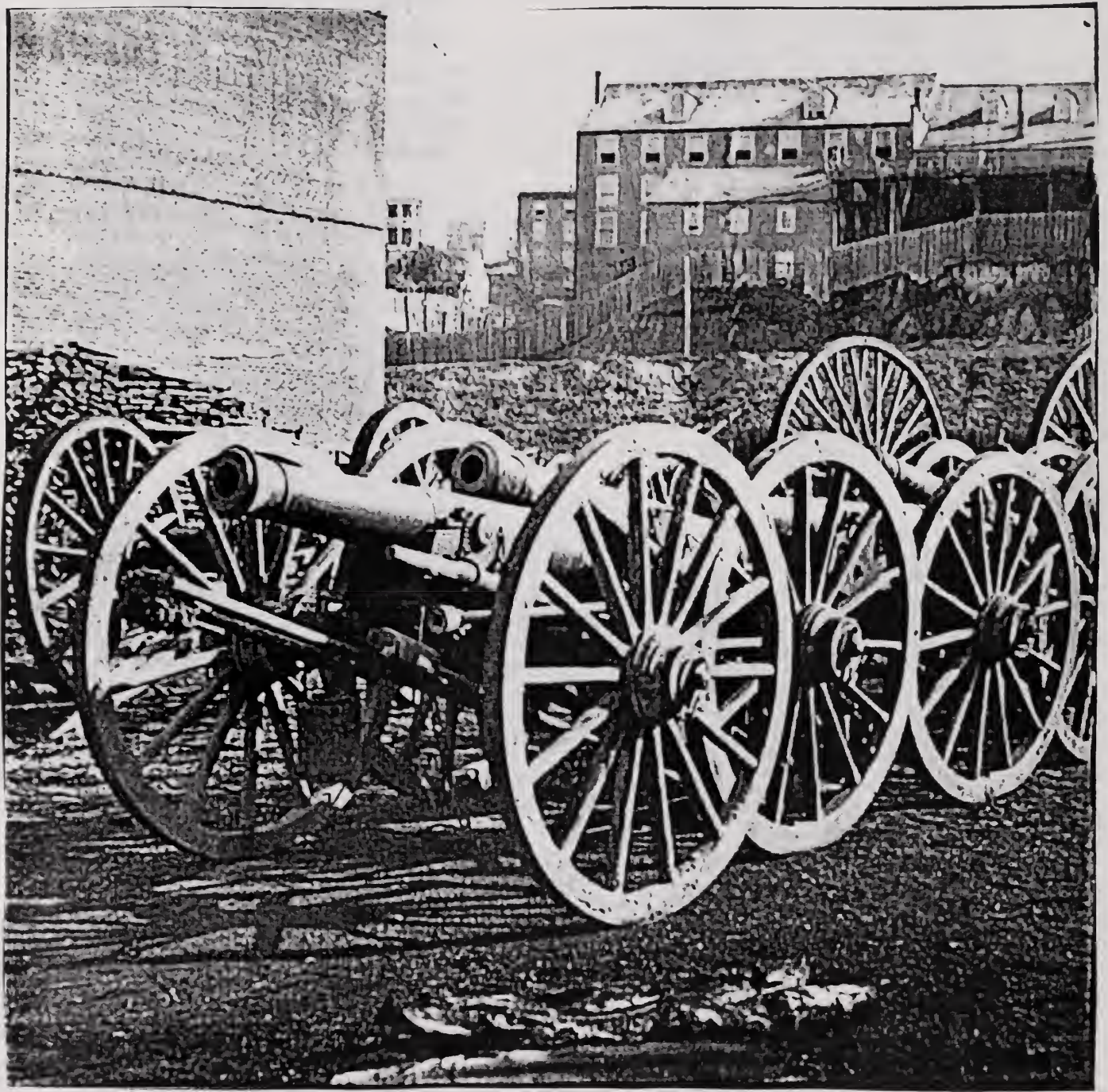
(1787-1863) Southern statesman

A Kentucky lawyer and politician, he was a U.S. Senator most years between 1835 and 1861. He achieved national prominence in the 1840s; he served as U.S. attorney general (1841-1850-1853) and strongly opposed the Mexican war and the Kansas-Nebraska Act (1854). An anti-secessionist, he supported Lincoln and worked to keep Kentucky in the Union. In December 1860 he offered the Senate the Crittenden Compromise, proposing the extension of the Missouri Compromise line to the Pacific, but this peace-keeping measure was rejected by both sides. He returned to Kentucky to promote that state's neutrality, and sat in the U.S. Congress until his death.

Bell, John

(1797-1869) Southern statesman

He was born in Nashville and became a prominent lawyer there. As a U.S. Representative (1827-1841) he at first supported Andrew Jackson; after a subsequent rift, he led the Tennessee Whigs for 20 years. He was briefly President William Henry Harrison's secretary of war (March-September 1841). His moderation alienated Southerners during his U.S. Senate career (1847-1859) and doomed his presidential candidacy on the Constitutional Union ticket in 1860. He worked to keep Tennessee in the Union, but was finally forced to recommend a Confederate alliance.



THE CIVIL WAR

1861 - 1865

Samuel Paine and Thomas Paine, Jr.,
Somerville residents and nephews of
Joshua H. Davis, Sr., volunteer for service.

Samuel Paine's photograph and company follow.

Thomas Paine, Jr. saw famous battles and served under
famous generals. Three letters to his uncle describe his
experiences.

Samuel and Thomas, Jr. are the sons of Thomas and
Azubah Davis Paine, brother-in-law and sister of
Joshua H. Davis, Sr.



SAMUEL PAINE
THREE YEARS' SERVICE
24TH MASS. VOL. CO. F
Fought at Gettysburg



THOMAS PAINE, JR.
UNION ARMY ENGINEER

Camp near Falmouth, Va.
April 5, 1863

Dear Uncle,

Your kind letter of the 13th of February came duly to hand. I was much pleased to hear from you but owing to other duties I have not had an opportunity to answer it until the present time.

You speak truly when you say those at home can form no idea of the experiences of a soldier. In some points particularly those of the sufferings of a soldier most people are apt to overrate while in regard to their deserts they do not seem to truly appreciate.

To be sure my experience has not been as rough as many have had but I never seen anything which I could call suffering. Always well fed and clothed.

Of the horrors of war I have seen but little. I witnessed several of the most bloody fights we have had, at Fair Oaks, Malvern Hill, South Mountain, Antietam and Fredericksburg. Words cannot express the horror of the sight of man fighting against brother man in such an unholy case, to see strong lines of men advancing on a battery and when within a hundred yards of the coveted prize to be mowed down like grass, by the grape and canister from the guns of the enemy. I have seen the field of battle before the wounded were removed or the dead buried and there side by side might be seen two men wounded (one having been fighting for the Union and the other against it,) with dead and dying all around, clasping each other's hands and calling down curses on the men who had

caused the strife. It may seem impossible to you but between the soldiers of this army and the soldiers of Lee's army there exists a mutual feeling of something bordering on friendship & it is not unusual to hear of them conversing together across the lines as pleasantly as if there were no difference between them

Perhaps you would like to have an idea of engineer duty. I will give you an outline of it, in as short a style as possible. First is Ponton Bridge building. It is built of Ponton boats, barks, chasses. A Ponton boat is a kind of scow-shaped boat 21 feet long and 5 feet wide and about 4 feet deep. Chasses are 2 inch planks 15 feet long, 1 foot wide. Balk are timber 5 inches square & 27 feet long. The boats are parallel with the shore 20 feet apart, the balk are then laid (5 of them) across from one boat to the other, & lashed down. Then covered with Chasses. The boats are anchored every other one up stream and every fourth one down stream. This kind of bridge had been found by actual test in France to stand more than any other portable bridge known.

We have built a great many of them, some of them only one or two hundred feet in length, the longest ones being across the mouth of the Chickahominy over which McLellan's army retreated from Harrison's Landing in August last was 2000 feet, one across the Potomac river at Harper's Ferry 865 feet and one across the Potomac at Berlin 1500 feet. These bridges can be thrown very quickly with 200 men, the number we generally work with. We can lay it at the rate of 400 feet an hour & can be taken up in one-half the time. A

Copy of Mahan's Field Fortification would give you a full description of all our work, including Bridge building.

The next is constructing siege material, Gabions, Facines, &c. A gabion is a kind of basket work about the size of a flour barrel open at both ends. 9 stakes are driven in the ground in a Circle of 6 feet making 2 feet diam. and 3 feet long. These are wattled up with any small stuff such as hickory ash or any tough material that will bend, when it has been woven to within three inches of the top, it is fastened down & taken out of the ground. The ends of the stakes are then cut off even and the gabion is finished. These are used in the revetment of Field works. Facines are Poles made up into bundles 18 feet long & 9 inches diameter & bound together. these are also used in Revetments. Sometimes logs, planks, sod or stockade revetment is used, as the circumstances admit. This is all we have to do in the way of manual labor. In the construction of Field fortifications, we oversee the work which is usually done by one or two Volunteer regiments.

On the 6th of February I left this camp to superintend a work at Acquia Creek & was there six weeks. I had 900 men every day which was pleasant during that time. It was the largest work I had ever been on alone. I took great pride in doing it up well. Gen. Geary complimented me highly for my work & gave me an introduction to all his staff.

I have given you in short an idea of our duty. We are not called upon to fight but carry arms for our own security as sometimes we have to work in the face of the enemies fire.

I had some reason to expect a furlough in June, but a recent order from Head Quarters stops the granting of any after April first, consequently I shall have to wait until they see fit to grant them again. My health is good. I have not had with the exception of a cold last July.

My love to all your family. I should be pleased to have a letter from Annie or Mary.

Hoping to hear from you again as often as your time will admit of writing.

I remain

Your affec. Nephew
Thomas Paine

Co. C. U.S. Engineers
Capt. C. E. Cross
Genl. Hooker's Headquarters

U. S. Engineer Camp near
Spottsylvania C. H.
May 18, 1864

Dear Uncle,

Being in camp today and with nothing in particular to occupy my time and thinking a letter direct from the army might be of interest to you, I thought I would write you, and give you what information I can. I suppose the daily papers are full of startling accounts and rumors of Fights, victories &c and no doubt in the main many of them are true or the basis of them at least.

It has now been fifteen days since the Army of the Potomac commenced its move against the Army of Northern Virginia, and during that time they have fought eleven days. Only three or four of which however were of very hard fighting.

The Army throughout are all awoke at one o'clock when they cook their breakfast and by half past two or three, are ready for any move the Commanding general may have ordered.

At about 4 o'clock the fighting usually commences which lasts for four or five hours, when owing to the heat it is impossible for infantry to continue fighting any longer, but hold the positions they may have gained during the night.

Artillery is then placed in the most commanding positions & keep up a slow and steady shelling of the enemy until about 5 P. M. when the infantry again advance and the fighting is kept up until it is so dark that it is impossible to

see the enemy's position. This is the usual routine of the army. Sometimes however some strategic move is made at different time, as for instance on the morning of the 12th inst. at about 2 o'clock the whole of the 2d Corps were drawn in line and charged the enemy's position and completely surprised them, taking 3000 prisoners and 23 pieces of Artillery. It was raining hard at the time and the pickets of the enemy did not discover our approach until it was too late to give the alarm. Among the prisoners were 3 Brigadier Generals.

The Army met with a severe loss in Gen. John Sedgwick who was killed on the 9th inst. while reconnoitring the position of the enemy.

Our losses have been very heavy owing in part to the fact that we are the attacking party and have to attack positions which have been carefully selected by the enemy. It is thought that the enemy's loss is equal to ours from the fact that they have in their retreat been obliged to leave the most of their wounded on the field. It is estimated our loss in killed, wounded and missing will reach nearly 50,000 which are large figures and show that there had been hard fighting done. The enemy fight with desperation.

Our Army have confidence in their Generals and I think we shall whip Lee here. The duty of this branch of the service has been very hard during the campaign. Until within a day or two we have had to work all the time nearly, in laying out earthworks and repairing bridges, roads, &c. My health has continued good.

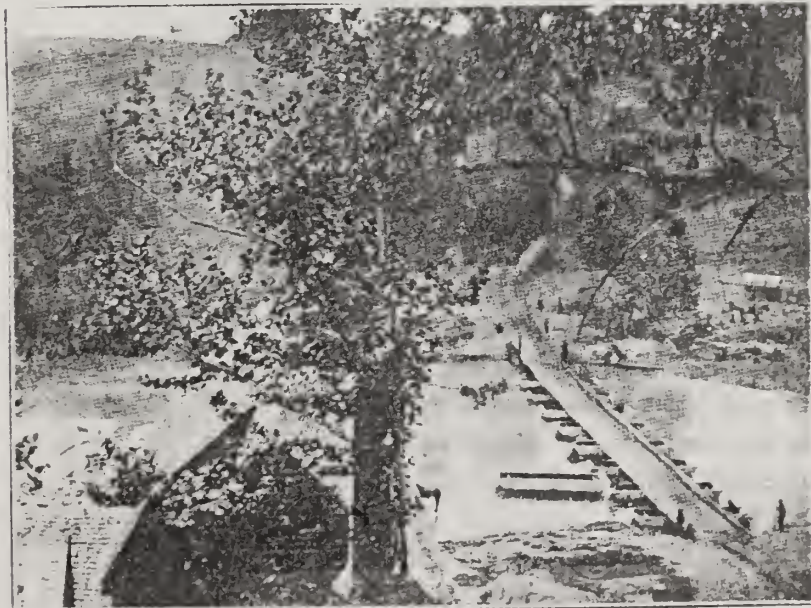
We have discouraging news from Gen. Banks army. I was very much surprised indeed at his conduct. I always believed him to be a very able general to command a force of 40 to 50,000 men but he has failed it seems. We have cheering news from Gen. Sherman which I hope is true. We hear he has taken Atlanta, which will be a severe blow to the enemy, it being a stronghold to them next to Richmond.

I think this campaign is the last and I hope it will end in the rebellion being completely crushed.

I should be pleased to hear from you and much love to all your family,

I remain your affec. nephew

Thomas



Camp near Petersburg, V
June 29, 1864

Dear Uncle,

Your welcome letter of the 10th inst. was duly received and I was very glad to hear from you. Since I wrote you this army has changed its base and is now as you are aware south of the James.

Before leaving Peninsula we have some pretty severe work. It was found impossible to take the enemies works by storm or to bombard them out of their position, consequently the sterner necessities were or were about to be resorted to, to their works, which was to run a sap and mine under their works and blow them up. This duty devolved upon us engineers and the work was commenced, and we had two mines run completely under their works and move to this new position.

That was the first practical mining we have done and we were very much disappointed in not having an opportunity to finish it. The mine we run was 2-1/2 by 3-1/2 feet square and the distance from our works to those of the enemy about 200 yards. You can judge of the amount of work it is to pass all the dirt from one end of the mine to the other. The size only admits of two men working at a time in the end of the mine to dig and the other to put up the supports. The mine for the most of the distance was from 5 to 8 feet under ground, sometimes however coming to within a foot of the surface and again 15 or 20 feet below. At the point under the works of the enemy it was ended in a chamber about 6 feet square, 2 feet deep

and 18 inches below the level of the terreplane.

At the crossing of the James we threw a Pontoon Bridge (though by the papers I see it is credited to other troops) over 2100 feet long the longest floating bridge ever built in the world. Since that time we have not had much to do, except occasionally some of us have to go out for a night or two to lay out an advance line of Rifle Pits or a battery, which cannot be done in the day time.

We have a hard position to take here but I think if Grant sticks to it, it is only a work of time. Grant does not aim for Richmond for Lee's army, and if he is successful in taking Petersburg, he will have Lee's army in much the same position as that in which he had Pemberton's at Vicksburg.

Hoping that these few lines will be of interest, and with much love to all, I remain

Your affec. Nephew

Thomas



READY FOR THE ADVANCE THAT LEE DROVE BACK

Between these luxuriant banks stretch the pontoons and bridges to facilitate the rapid crossing of the North Anna by Hancock's Corps on May 24th. Thus was completed the passage to the south of the stream of the two wings of the Army of the Potomac. But when the center under Burnside was driven back and severely handled at Ox Ford, Grant immediately detached a brigade each from Hancock and Warren to attack the apex of Lee's wedge on the south bank of the river, but the position was too strong to justify the attempt. Then it dawned upon the Federal general-in-chief that Lee had cleaved the Army of the Potomac into two separated bodies. To reinforce either wing would require two crossings of the river, while Lee could quickly march troops from one side to the other within his impregnable wedge. As Grant put it in his report, "To make a direct attack from either wing would cause a slaughter of our men that even success would not justify."

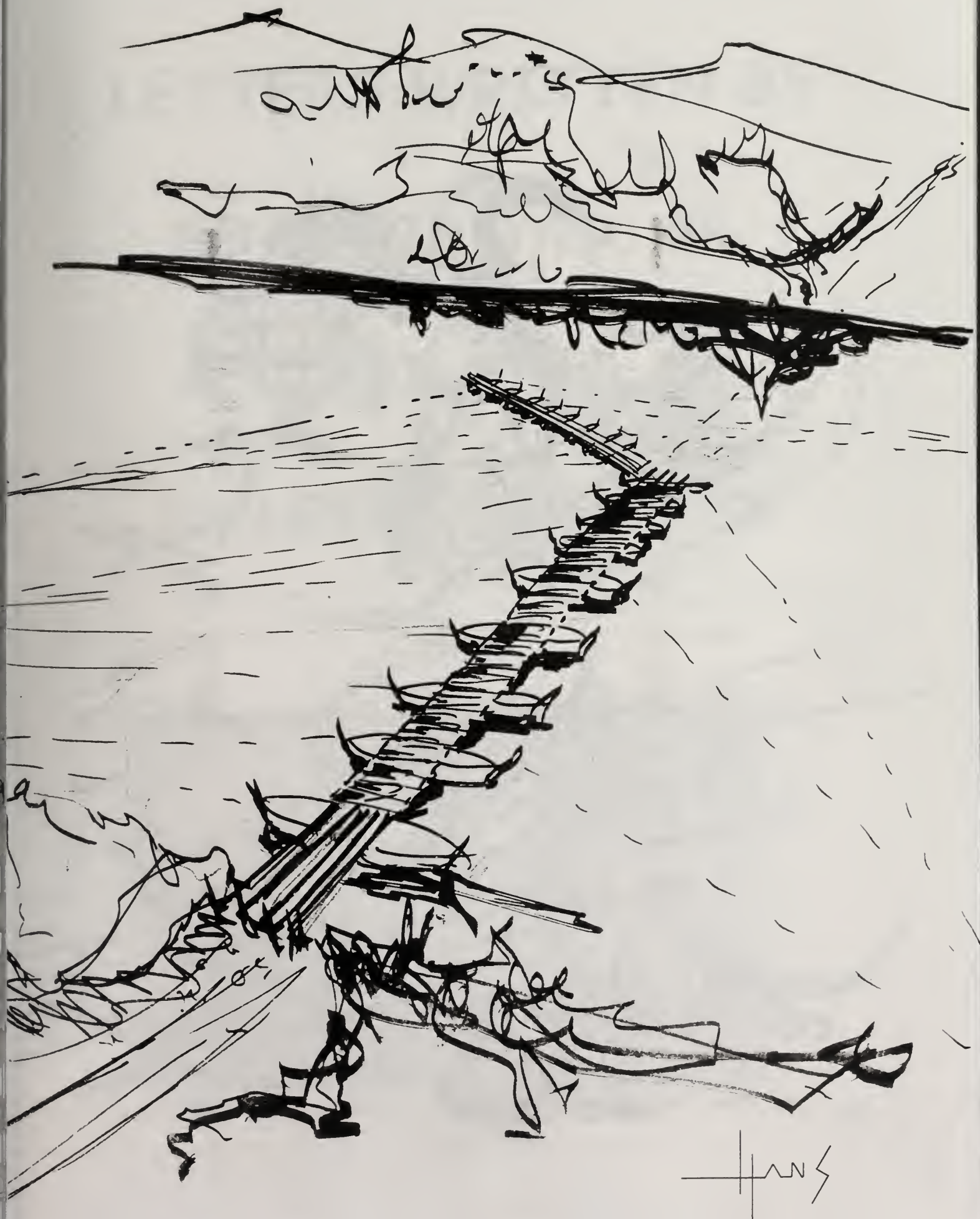


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THE REAR-GUARD

Thus the Federals held the approaches to their pontoon-bridge at Jericho Mill during the sultry days of May (24-26) while Grant was making up his mind that Lee's position could not be successfully attacked. The corps of Warren and Wright have all crossed the bridge, followed by the wagon-trains. Guards have been posted on either bank. The felled timber on the north bank was cut so as to allow the Federal reserve artillery to command the bridge. At either end sit two sentinels ready to challenge perfunctorily any straggler who may pass. The rest of the men have stacked arms and given themselves up to idleness, stretching their improvised shelters to shield them from the broiling sun. One man by the old mill is bathing his feet, weary with the long march.







LETTERS WRITTEN BY

BENJAMIN DYER, SR.,

BENJAMIN DYER, JR.

EBENEZER DAVIS DYER

175—All Sails Set, Cape Cod, Mass.



PHOTO BY ROGER A. WINTERS

BA-M2108

BENJAMIN DYER

BORN: October 23, 1793

DIED: January 27, 1871

MARRIED: August 15, 1816

Dinah Hinckley Davis

Benjamin was almost 23

Dinah was 19

“Benjamin Dyer followed the avocation of seaman from early boyhood until 1860, being more than half a century.

“He commanded several fine ships, and was a very competent and successful shipmaster. He was highly respected and esteemed for his many noble qualities and for his uncompromising integrity.

“I have ever felt under special obligation to Capt. Dyer for the substantial aid afforded me while I was endeavoring to obtain an education.

“Having had but limited opportunities to gain an education in his youth, and having been obliged to rely mainly upon his own efforts to obtain the knowledge which he found to be so essential to him, he made great efforts to educate his children.”

Joshua H. Davis, Sr. - Book of Family History

Mary Davis Dyer wrote a wonderful story about the surprise golden wedding anniversary in Truro in 1866 for Benjamin and Dinah Davis Dyer.



Benjamin Dyer, Sr.

BENJAMIN DYER, SR.

1793 - 1871

Truro, April 16, 1861

Dear Brother,

Your esteemed favors of 5th and 18th inst. with enclosures were duly received for which you have my thanks. Clouds do indeed thicken on the political heavens, and when if ever they will become serene and clear again is known only to him, who maketh the wrath of man praise him and restraineth the remainder.

Although you nor myself voted for the present chief magistrate I presume he was as fairly and constitutionally elected as others have been for series of years therefore I think as good citizens we should be content to let the majority rule and even afford the Administration our support as long as they conscientiously execute the laws as far as in them lies for the best interests of the country.

Lincoln inherited from the last detestable traitorous administration the command of the wreck of what was once the goodliest ship that ever sailed on any sea. Upon ascending the side and making his way to the quarter deck the mutinous crew could hardly be restrained from assassination. On a little closer inspection he found a splendid wreck foaming breakers close under the lee sails in shred rudder gone spar gone and others crippled in leaking at an alarming rate proceeding from holes bored in the bottom by the mutinous crew water and provision entirely exhausted and a dead calm but a fearful

looking squall as black as niggers rising from the southern quarter.

Now what should a good seaman do in this state of affairs? as there is but one thing to be done with any hope of success and that is let go both anchors and hope to hold on until a shift of wind or assistance is sent the once good ship may be yet saved although a wreck. Now suppose she was insured in your office. I suppose you would send assistance immediately a good steam boat plenty of good men and other needed appliances. The moral is of easy application. "Go thou and do likewise."

With regards to yourself and family and the rest of our friends I remain your affectionate

Brother

Benjamin Dyer

(written to Joshua H. Davis, retyped by Helen Davis, daughter of Solomon)

These brothers-in-law considered themselves "brothers."

How fitting it is this recently retired mariner should described the "ship of state" in terms he knew so well.

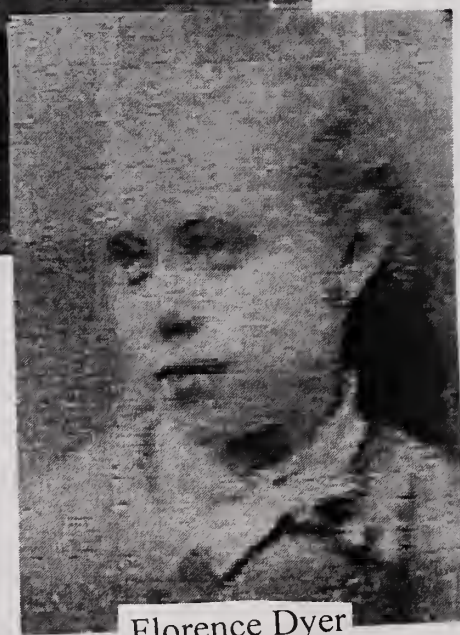
Spelling, usage and punctuation is original.



Benjamin, Dyer, Jr.



Arthur Dyer



Florence Dyer

On Jan. 22, 1862, Benjamin Dyer, Jr. was appointed acting master on gunboat *Maheska*. Aug. 25, 1864, was ordered to the command of steamer *Home*; remained till April 12, 1865, when ordered to the *St. Louis* at Port Royal. Was a brave and accomplished commander. Joined the navy as acting master Sept. 11, 1866. Appointed to the Pacific squadron and joined the *Dakota* at Caloa (*sic*), with wife and two children. Was next transferred to the store ship *Fredonia*, on board of which both himself and wife were swallowed up by the earthquake in Arica Bay, Peru, August 25, 1868, aged forty-four. Their two children were on shore at the time of the earthquake, one of whom, Arthur W. Dyer, furnished the particulars of this notice.

Shebnah Rich, History of Truro

U.S.S. *Fredonia*
Bay of Callao, Oct. 22d 1867 (*Peru*)

My dear Uncle,

Sometimes I have fancied that you might like to receive a letter from me (I know I would from you) and so I have now determined to allow this fancy to take form, but with what result I shall have to leave to you to judge, but trust it may succeed in producing a rejoinder.

For I flatter myself that not only you but my friends in Somerville have not become quite indifferent about me, and a letter written to one will be written to all. This by way of preface.

I am happy to say that myself and family are perfectly well. My wife's health seems to have been perfectly restored and I cannot see but that she is thoroughly well, and is very cheerful, happy and contented.

Florence has improved as much, grows finely and is the picture of health. Arthur always has been a robust child and as such continues. Both children are rapidly acquiring the language of the country and talk with each other in Spanish almost as often as in English.

I am very pleasantly situated here, my professional duties are light, and I have all the time with my family I can wish and since I have been attached to this ship I have not slept on board once, and take my meals with my family. You see that I could not be much better situated. In fact I am not suffering for my country.

The Admiral has been most kind to me in allowing me to remain here of which I am truly sensible.

The change from the Powhatan to this ship was of course quite a marked one though so far as the ships go not a disagreeable one. The Powhatan besides being a flag ship was a Frigate with about 400 men and where I will venture to affirm one could read human nature as exemplified in "men of wars men" if such could be read anywhere. The machinery of discipline was much more complicated than on board this ship (a modest store ship) with only 40 or 50 men to look after. While attached to the Powhatan I visited the coast to the southward, the Cincha Islands, and as far north as Panama. How however I regard

myself as a fixture here, for some time to come at least.

This is a queer country, so entirely different from good, staid puritanical New England. Were you to come here you would be struck with the change and not favorably either I think.

The climate however is a good one, and the difference between extreme heat and cold at the same hours of the day rarely exceeds 10 degrees in temperature. Of course it is healthy. It never rains in this portion of Peru (though it does dust) but there is much cloudy weather especially in winter, fog and Scotch mist.

In summer however the weather is delightful. Indeed I do not know of a more equable climate than this. But the people, what shall I say of them? Perhaps the least said the better. As a class they are ignorant, arrogant and out and out filthy, and one cannot have the most exalted ideas of the Incas judging from their descendants.

It was the good fortune or evil fortune of the Peruvians a year ago last May to beat off the Spaniards from here and since that time the Peruvians fancy themselves the beau ideals of military heroes, and would I verily believe have no hesitation in throwing down the gauntlet to the United States, France or England.

Since the Spanish affair Callao has been greatly strengthened in its defences. With so much military ardor it must find vent somewhere, and so in absence of the Spanish invaders, they get up fights and revolutions among

themselves, perhaps just "keep their hands in."

While I now write there is a revolution of rather a formidable character underway and some heavy fighting has taken place and the revolutionists have succeeded in taking Arequipa. However, the theatre of these warlike operations is a long way from here and at Callao & Lima everything is quiet.

A few political and military arrests have been made and frequent movements of considerable bodies of troops, but this is all.

If the revolution should reach here, which I hope it won't, and don't think it will, I am all ready to strike my tent on shore and gather my households idols together on board the ship.

In fact revolutions are chronic in this country and we regard them about as we do the frequent shocks of earthquake which rumble past. Each are important in proportion to magnitude. I think the public is of opinion that the present insurrection will be put down without difficulty. The issue now is between civil and ecclesiastical affairs.

And this leads me to say that the clergy and church party strenuously oppose every attempt to improvement and free institutions, and clutch with greedy fingers all of the old time prerogatives.

A bill was before the last Congress granting toleration to all sects but could not be carried, although its defeat was by a small majority.

Callao is the principle seaport of Peru and numbers about 30,000 inhabitants and among its business men has a large foreign element, and the same can be said of Lima in this respect. Notwithstanding the houses of both cities are constructed of mud (and stuccoed) there is a great deal of elegance particularly in Lima.

Some writer has designated the last city as the "paradise for pretty women, the purgatory for dogs and the hell for jackasses." I would judge that the last named unfortunates suffered torments enough to render it so in their case. They bear the most complicated burdens on their backs with a resigned patience which is almost comical.

Some few weeks ago I purchased a stove and fixtures (a pearl of a price in this country) and as the time drew near for its delivery, I looked out into the street to see if I could discover any signs of its arrival. My vision was fixed upon a donkey with something on his back which I could not make out. As he drew near "with slow and measured steps" to the wonderful burden proved to be my jewel of a stove, with pots and kettles in their place, stove pipe shipped, in fact all ready for "firing up."

Back of that sat the driver, his legs dangling nearly to the ground, but necessarily so far aft that as the donkey switched his tail it was an open question from all appearances whether that appendage belonged to man or beast. I think if you had seen it you would have laughed as heartily as I did.

My house is one of a block of 16, all exactly alike, but, bless you, in an aristocratic street if it does own to being cosmopolitan. In proof thereof. The owner was born in France, one of his parents was Irish, he is a naturalized citizen of the United States, but what he is of Peru I know not except a contractor. He button-holed me the other day and in confidence told me that if some 5 or 6 somebodies should die, he would be a bona-fide Marquis. Only think of it! to pay rent to almost a Marquis!

My next door neighbor claims to be son of the Marquis of Hastings. In fact he is my great card and if you were to visit me, I should undoubtedly point him out to you as the keeper of a menagerie would some singular animal, as such indeed he is.

Admitting the Marquis of Hastings fact, he says nothing of his mother, and rumor says there is some sort of hitch there somehow. But that doesn't alter the fact that there are residing above me almost a Lord Hastings.

Then come a sprinkling of Peruvian Generals and Colonels and who as they pass by are always suggestive of garlic, then a few Scotch families, bluff and honest even if they have no drop of blood of Bruce or Wallace in their composition.

Then an ex-President of Ecuador with an unwritable name but who has formerly sent forth his edicts, "Now therefore I &c." He is now sojourning in my block in inglorious exile. As I look at him (sometimes when I am in a pensive or moralizing mood), I wonder if

he was much given to swinging around the circle, or if his forte lay in vetoes. Be that as it may here he is now, and goes to help make our block aristocratic and cosmopolitan.

The dweller in No. 13 is myself but modesty forbids me to say what effect my presence may have upon the other denizens of "Chiqueto."

Our street is situated upon the site of old Callao which was devoured by an earthquake in 1745. Looking out of our parlor window and within a stone's throw, are the Arches (foundation arches I mean) of the old Cathedral. Looking upon them I sometimes fancy if they could speak they might say with Shakespeare "To what vile uses do we come at last!" For the "chola" women consider them convenient for throwing in dead babies which are always being discovered and always being fished out.

But after all, if any one can make up his mind to take the world as he finds it, he can find much to interest, amuse and instruct him even in Peru. I'm sure my family and myself enjoy ourselves very much.

By the way of I haven't spoken of the fleas, it is not because they do not exist.

I suppose I have written all you will care to read and will lay aside my pen before I tire you further. I shall be most glad to hear from you and when you write direct to me to this ship.

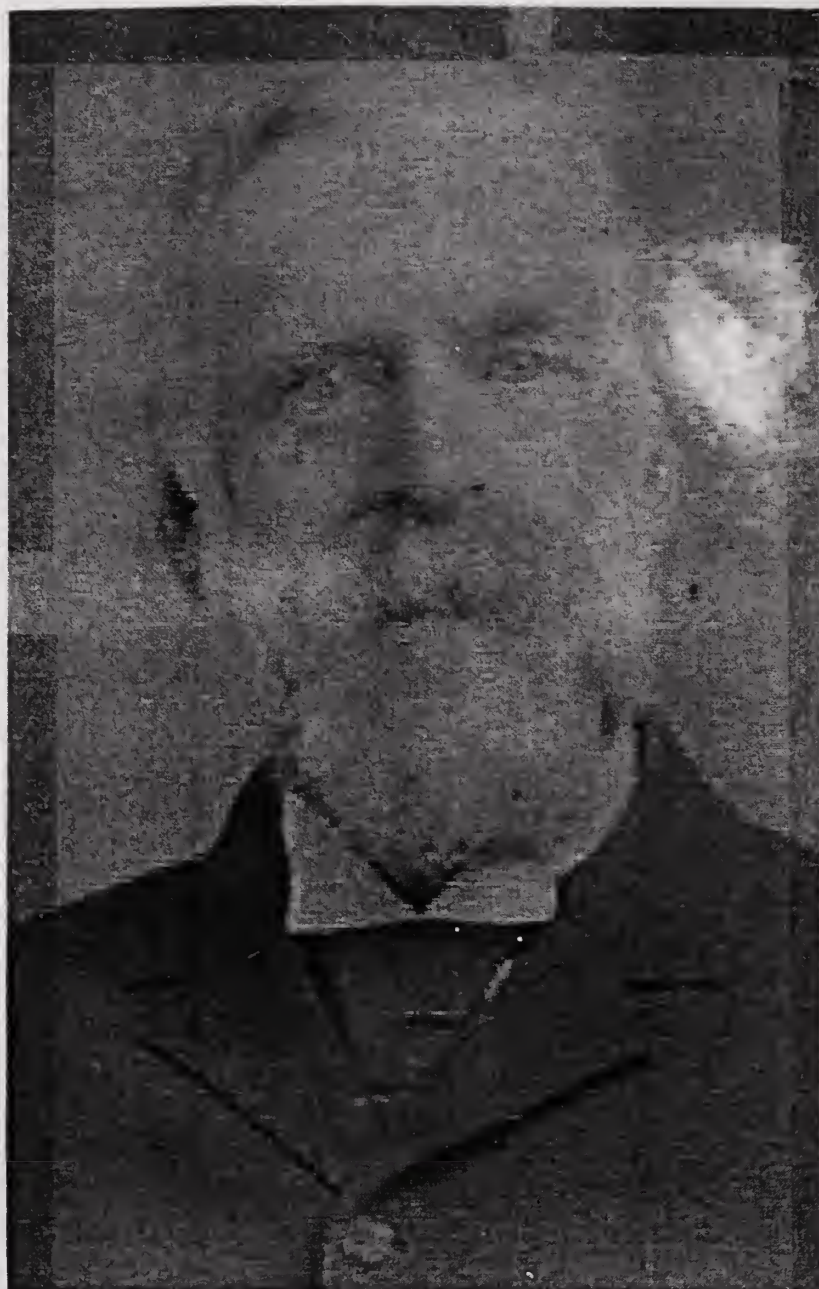
Much love to your family and Somerville friends in which I am joined

by my wife and children. And hoping this may find you and yours in the enjoyment of health and in the midst of prosperity, I remain

Your affct nephew

Benj. Dyer





Ebenezer Davis Dyer

DYER

Ebenezer Davis Dyer (E. D. Dyer) was the second son of Benjamin and Dinah Dyer. He was a house carpenter and resided in Newton, MA. He married Sarah, daughter of Zoheth and Sarah Rich of Truro. Their children were Emily and Mabel. He was born ca. 1830-31 and died June 8, 1909. He is probably writing to Solomon Davis (who was in the clothing business), the son of his Uncle Joshua H. Davis, Sr.

Newton April 21st 1902 or 1903

Dear Cousin,

I should have written you before this thanking you for the superb present you sent in commemoration of my 72d birthday. But some times a fellow is so surprised he cant say much.

We could talk for another fellow but words dont tumble out so readily when one s own heart swells to its full capacity with gratitude.

I thank you or I am very much obliged seem so tame and common place and yet it is about all the English language gives us to say. Perhaps on your 72d birthday some one will send you a reminder. I hope it will be something nice but he may sass you, People do sometimes. You cant tell where the blow will fall on back or stomach.

Well, I christened that coat and vest the first Sunday I owned it as proud as a boy of ten. Everything seemed to be changed. the choir sang better, the parson preached better and somehow I felt I was not the old sinner I was a week before.

Of course it was the suit that made the difference. Then the girls gave me some collars and as Uncle Joe Collins used to say You come to meeting with your necks all garted up. So did I. I tell you Solomon in all his glory was no where in comparison to the 72 year old dude.

It does a fellow good once in a while to feel he is as good as anyone else. Then once a minute or so my mind would go to the big hearted fellow who with his usual kindness of heart made all this self importance possible. The fit was perfect, sleeves long enough, every thing just right. Could not have been better. Again I thank you for the gift.

When one is going down the decline of life and the shadows are lengthening (mine are pretty long cast when the sun gets a good rake at me) it is pleasant to find friends to cheer and keep him from being gloomy.

This is a grand old world if some do speak disparagingly of it. There is more good than evil, more joy than sorrow, more sunshine than cloud.

Spring is beginning to put on its garments of green and icy coldness is giving the way to warmth and glow.

We are all well and the quartette send love and good wishes to you and yours. I have not seen your people but once since you were here, presume they are well.

Affectionately,

E. D. Dyer

(After receiving the gift of a barrel of cranberries)

Newton, Nov. 13th 1902

Dear Cousin,

The last I heard from you, you were on your way to a church supper too much absorbed in the idea of a tuck out for the physical frame to attend to any business but presumably cake, ice cream and sass. The last I presume was more in mind than anything else.

Has not sufficient time elapsed to get down to a normal condition of digestion to let a fellow know how much his sass costs so that he can pay a sass bill for a barrel of sass that came yesterday.

I have not got sass on the brain but on the stomach and the brain is doing its utmost to find out how much the pesky thing cost. We are fearfully and wonderfully made. It takes less time to get sass out of the stomach and bowels than the bill out of the brain, that is I have found it so since I began to get sassed.

With your generous nature you would do your utmost to relieve the forementioned functions why wont you pluck up and help a fellow out of the brain difficulty.

We are all well except the brain difficulty that seems to affect the whole family. Sarah understands herb doctoring pretty well but this sass attack puzzles her. Mustard, tansy, sweet farn, and nutmegs are powerless in this case. A little paper describing the quantity of sass sent with the price thereof would do the cure. We will attend to the rest.

Give our love to your family keeping a good hunk yourself and like a good boy you are send your bill not for the giving of live but for the sass.

Affectionately,

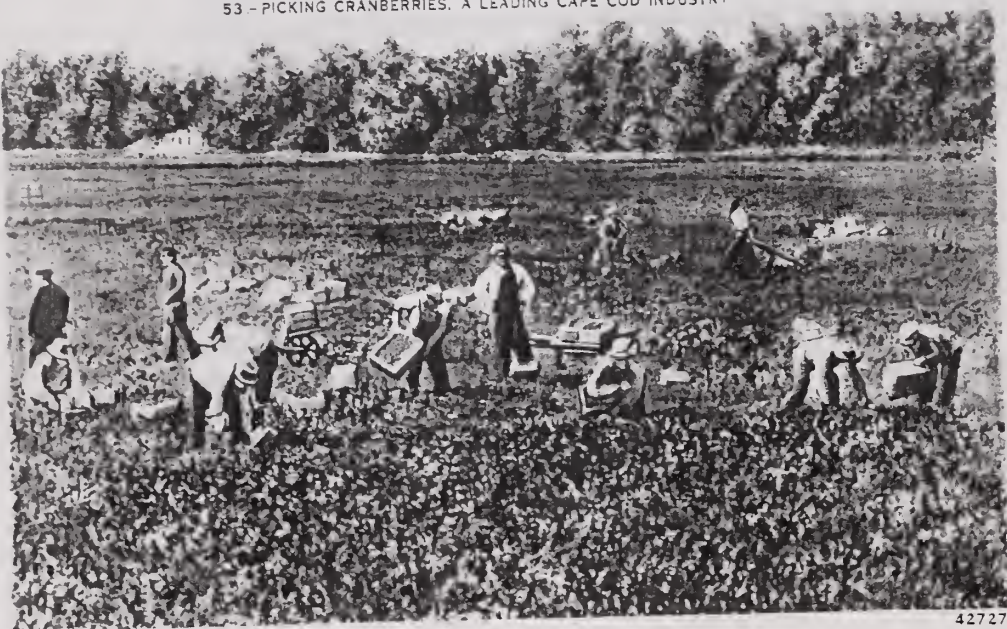
E. D. Dyer



(Photo by Hicks)

76268

53 - PICKING CRANBERRIES. A LEADING CAPE COD INDUSTRY



42727

ODDS

&

ENDS



CAPTAIN EDMUND BURKE

This excerpt was taken from the chapter entitled "Seafaring and Landfaring" of Shebnah Rich's book, TRURO - CAPE COD or LAND MARKS AND SEA MARKS, C. 1883.

I had read this account several times, but it became especially meaningful since I learned that Captain Burke ties into our family history.

Edmund Burke was the adopted son of Lewis and Sarah Gross Lombard. He was an English boy Captain Lombard found wandering the streets of London.

Therefore, Edmund Burke was a first cousin to our great-grandmother Anna Gross Lombard Davis.

This is not the first time an adoption took place in this family. Anna and Sarah's father Jaazaniah Gross took an Italian boy named Francis Pascal under his wing. Francis Pascal became a Truro citizen, married a local girl and became the father of three before he was lost at sea at a young age. The name Pascal still exists in Truro.

CAPTAIN EDMUND BURKE was many years the popular master of the Boston and Fayal packet *Azor*, known, while sailing under the British Flag, as *Fredonia*. On New Year's Day, 1866, on his passage to Boston, in latitude 41, longitude 53, discovered the ship *Gratitude*, with two hundred and seventy-five passengers from Liverpool to New York, in a sinking condition. After learning her condition, Captain Burke threw overboard his

between-deck's cargo, and transferred every soul, including women and children, safely on board his bark.

Owing to the large number, they were obliged to be put upon an allowance of bread, water, and oranges. They arrived in Boston Sunday, the 14th. The arrival in mid-winter of a shipload of half-starved and suffering men, women, and children, produced no small excitement. The city government took charge of the passengers, and nothing was spared toward their comfort.

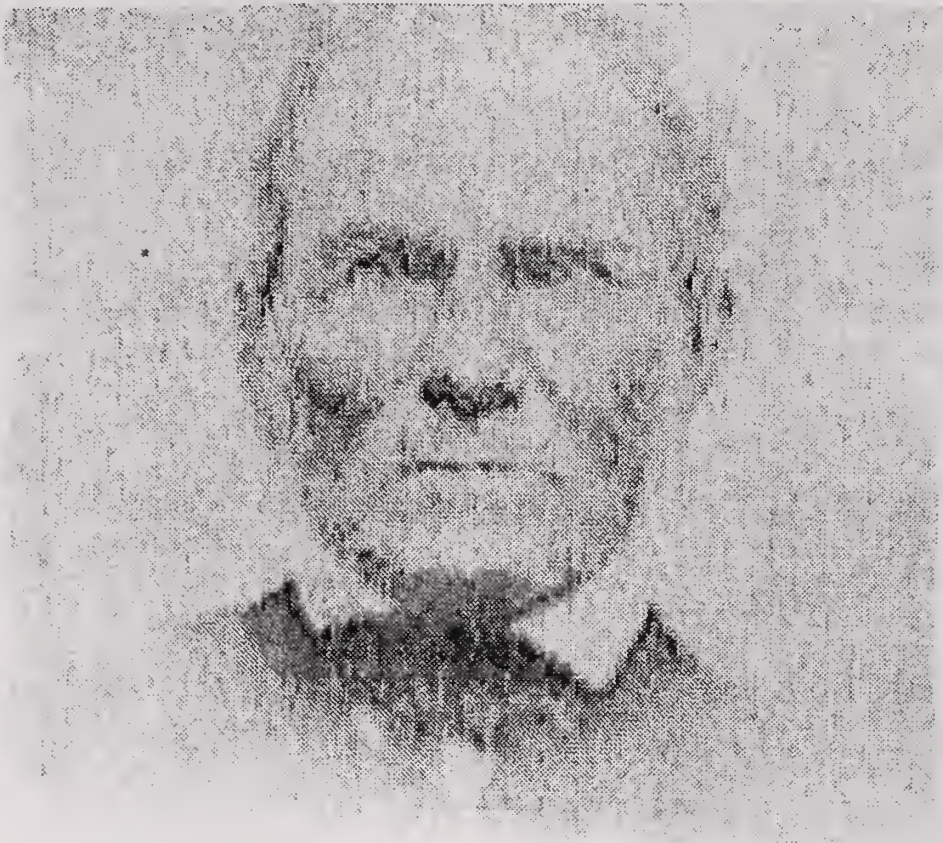
Captain Burke found himself a hero. He had done only what every man ought to do, and what every humane man would do; but he had done his duty with an indifference to the results which might have proved disastrous to his business interests. In consideration thereof the merchants of Boston, in recognition of his noble conduct, generously contributed and presented him, the sum of five thousand dollars. The British government presented him with a chronometer watch, suitably engraved. Generous and sympathetic the Captain may be, but possibly he may have the fear of consequences before his eyes, and sometimes allows his better impulses to be overruled by a craven spirit. To all such the history of Captain Burke is a noble example of untrammelled generosity, and its reward. He moved from Truro to Somerville, where he died, 1876, aged fifty-three.

A year ago I was under the impression that James Webb Davis had been the keeper of the light in Truro.

It was his son James Davis (husband of Nancy and father of Sarah B) who actually had this job. James Davis died in 1852 at the age of 52.

This new information is perplexing as it relates to Henry David Thoreau who talked with "Lieutenant Davis" when he visited Truro's Highland Lighthouse in the later 1850's.

Obviously, Thoreau did not converse with the younger James. Perhaps James Webb Davis, an old-timer of 85, hung around the lighthouse and chanced upon Thoreau when he visited. He would have had a connection to the lighthouse, and his knowledge of tides and seafaring would have been vast.



JAMES WEBB DAVIS
1770 - 1864



170 BLUFFS AND BEACH, HIGHLAND LIGHT, CAPE COD, MASS.

52346

Mary Davis Dyar's 1866 journal entry about her trip to Truro mentions the following:

"Solomon saw Sarah B at meeting Sunday night and she told him Mrs. Nancy Davis wanted us to spend the afternoon there, and so we did..."

"After dinner...Solomon and I started at about one and walked to Mrs. Davis's, a distance of about two and one half miles...where we arrived after two."

"In the course of the afternoon, Solomon, Sarah B and I walked up to the Backside, three quarters of a mile more."

"...returned to Mrs. Davis's, saw old Mr. Burdett, her father 86 years old..."

"Sarah B" (Sarah Burdett Davis Cordes) was a second cousin to Mary and Solomon Davis. Sarah B's father James and Mary's father Joshua were first cousins.

James's father was James Webb Davis, older brother to Ebenezer Davis, Joshua's father.

James Webb Davis and Ebenezer Davis were the sons of the original Truro Davis, Benjamin Davis who married Betsey Rowe in 1767,

Benjamin and Betsey Rowe Davis had four children: Benjamin Davis, 2nd who settled in Maine ca. 1812; James Webb Davis; Ebenezer Davis; and Betsey Davis Myrick.

Benjamin Davis, 2nd and his progeny had been gone from Truro for

more than 50 years and would not be considered Truro relatives at the time of Mary's visit.

Betsey Davis married Solomon Myrick, had one daughter named Azubah Davis Myrick, and died young. Solomon Myrick married twice more in Truro. Azubah Davis Myrick married Isaac Laha and, like her mother, died young after bearing two sons -- Isaac Solomon Laha and Richard Laha. There appeared to be an estrangement between the Davises and the Myrick/Laha families, so they do not factor into the family relationship other than for stark dates.

Therefore, it is logical for the James Webb Davis and Ebenezer Davis lines to seek out each other's company. They were the only ones left with Truro connections.

In 1866 "Sarah B" Davis Cordes was 35 years old, married to Naphthali Cordes, and the mother of two sons - Charles Henry Cordes, 12, and William Hallett Cordes, 8. Her oldest son, James Davis Cordes, died at age 12 in 1864. A daughter, Mabel Freeman Cordes was born in 1870.

Mrs. Nancy Davis, Sarah B's mother, was about 65. She lost her husband James in 1852. James was 52 and the lighthouse keeper in Truro.

Sarah B's husband Naphthali was the son of Giraud and Priscilla Rich Dyer Cordes. Giraud was born in Bordeaux, France in 1787. I believe Priscilla was a young widow when she married Giraud as her second husband. The Cordes children were born when

Priscilla was between 27 and 45. Giraud was about 10 years old. Priscilla married for the third time when she was 68.

The name Naphthali is exclusive to the Dyer family. I believe Priscilla's first husband was Naphthali Dyer, and, as we've seen before, a son of a second marriage was named for his mother's first husband, i.e., Naphthali Cordes.

Benjamin Dyer, married to Joshua H. Davis, Sr.'s oldest sister Dinah Hinckley Davis Dyer, was the son of a Naphthali Dyer and brother to a Naphthali Dyer. It was probably Benjamin Dyer's brother was Naphthali who left Priscilla a young widow.

In the tangled ball of twine of our ancestry, the Naphthali/Benjamin Dyer connection to our Davises is another twist.

I wonder if the French name Cordes was pronounced "Cor-DAY." I also wonder if it was Cape Cod-icized to "CORDS" or "COR-DISS" in later generations.



Atmospheric erosion caused an error in my calculation of dates as they pertained to Emily Peterson Small's family.

When I visited the Peterson graves in November of 1998, I read the birth date of her baby son as July rather than February.

The gravestone used the number "2" to denote February. The stone was worn, and I read it as "7" for July.

This means Emily was not pregnant when her photo was taken. Her sad picture was most likely taken after the boy was born and her husband drowned in the early months of 1850. It could also have been taken later than October of that year following the baby's death.



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HOW TO MAKE
A CHINESE JUNK
&
A NANTUCKET SINK

COPIED WORD-FOR-WORD
FROM MARY DAVIS DYAR'S
INSTRUCTIONS

I DARE YOU!!

HOW TO MAKE A CHINESE JUNK

Take square of paper.

Find middle.

Fold all points over to exact middle.

Fold 2 opposite edges over to meet at middle, making points come inside.

Bring short edges together so as to leave the slits outside.

Having the fold away from you, make a boat by bringing both edges up even with one another at the top into points at right and left.

Turn over and repeat. This makes a double boat.

Draw out all the loose parts inside the boat into a large single triangular piece. Do this on both sides.

Fold the 3 corners back to meet.

Do this on both sides.

Turn back the rectangular flap thus made.

Pull out by the flaps into a box with leaves like a table.

Fold these flaps back again leaving a square open box.

Fold top edges of box back to bottom edges in such a way as to bring the ends of the one carrying the flaps under the others; this makes a square picture frame.

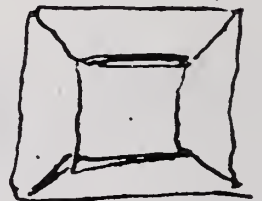
Fold so as to bring the ends that have the loose triangular pieces together with these triangles on the outside.

Pull out opposite ends taking hold of 2 edges at each end; pull way out being careful not to tear.

Turn over; pull out ends to make square sails.

Draw in the box hole at the middle so as to form flat decks in front of the sails.

Shape the box in the middle into a cabin, longest across and flat at the bottom and so as to leave gangway along the sides from one deck to the other.



like this

HOW TO MAKE A NANTUCKET SINK

Begin with square of paper.

Find the middle.

Fold all points over to exact middle.

Bring opposite edges together with fold along the middle and points outside.

Lay with folded edge away from you then bring right hand upper corner down to middle of lower edge.

Turn paper over and repeat.

Open up a triangle thus made by inserting finger at the bottom, making a square.

With closed end at top, insert finger in slit and open up and out into a pocket.

Turn paper over to repeat.

With pockets at top, bring upper edge down even with lower edge as far as it will go on each side, and form small triangular, vertical pockets at end.

Turn paper over to repeat.

Now bring the short edges at side together from left to right so the edges will be even.

Turn paper over and repeat.

Place paper with points at the top; there will be loose slits down the middle.

Turn back the loose corners as much as is single, making little triangles; the points must come to a crease above; do this to both the corner; turn paper over and repeat.

Bring perpendicular, or right and left, edges over to meet slit in middle.

Turn paper over and repeat.

Bring 3 triangular parts at the upper side and on right and left over to meet at one point, so as to make the ends square.

Fold these ends way back, making flaps.

Pull on these flaps to make a box with legs and shelves at the sides.

This is your Nantucket sink.

Nantucket is an island near Martha's Vineyard off the south coast of Massachusetts.

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